THE DAILY VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL

JOHN E. STOUT
JAMES V. THOMPSON

Merle F. Wolverton

Garrett Dorm. D.

Evanston Illinois

7/30/1925

The Abingdon Religious Education Texts
David G. Downey, General Editor
DAILY VACATION CHURCH SCHOOL SERIES.
GEORGE HERBERT BETTS, Editor

The Daily Vacation Church School

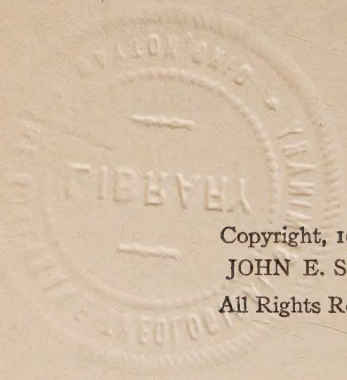
How to Organize and Conduct It

BY
JOHN E. STOUT
and
JAMES V. THOMPSON

Prepared in Cooperation with the
International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools

LIBRARY OF
Bonebrake Theological Seminary
BV
1585
.S25
1923
9,783

THE ABINGDON PRESS
NEW YORK CINCINNATI



Copyright, 1923, by
JOHN E. STOUT
All Rights Reserved

Printed in the United States of America

First Edition Printed June, 1923
Reprinted May, 1924

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
	INTRODUCTION	5
	EDITOR'S FOREWORD	7
I.	ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE VACATION SCHOOL	9
II.	WHAT SHOULD VACATION SCHOOLS SEEK TO DO?	15
III.	PREPARING THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY FOR THE VACATION SCHOOL	26
IV.	SETTING UP THE ORGANIZATION	35
V.	PLANNING THE BUDGET AND SECURING FINANCIAL SUPPORT	49
VI.	PROVIDING HOUSING, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES	54
VII.	CHOOSING THE CURRICULUM	66
VIII.	PLANNING THE DAILY PROGRAM	71
IX.	CONDUCTING THE SCHOOL SESSION	82
X.	RELATING THE SCHOOL TO HOME, CHURCH, AND COMMUNITY	98
XI.	STANDARDS AND MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS	109

INTRODUCTION

"A LITTLE child shall lead them" is the inspired phrase expressing the fundamental basis of the new science of religious education. This study and service of the child is leading the church and the community into an interpretation and application of the Christian religion, which is renewing the life of the church and insuring its future, not only in the realm of education but in the social and political life of the nation.

The vacation week-day church school represents a combination of vital elements in a program which has demonstrated its usefulness and permanence not only in North America but also on the foreign mission fields. Children naturally respond to rhythm, worship, stories, dramatics, handcraft and loyalty. These elements are presented in vacation schools through the period of worship, the songs and marches, the Bible stories and dramatization, the expressional activities and the salute to the American and the Christian flags. Led by the need of the children, the promoters and teachers have used this program in an ever-increasing number of schools, reaching a total of over half a million boys and girls.

The modern church, with its departments of worship, service and religious education, is rapidly developing everywhere the idea of the church school, with its Sunday session, or Sunday school; its week-day session, related to the public school

system; and its vacation session, for special emphasis during the summer season. The daily vacation church school, therefore, is rapidly being incorporated as a vital segment of the annual program of a successful church.

The final chapter of this book might well be read first, in order that its challenge should stimulate the reader to study the other chapters more closely. The contents are most comprehensive in the treatment of what is involved in the promotion, organization, conduct, standards and results of a vacation school. No field offers more unlimited opportunities for the devout Christian educator to render effective service than the standardization of the vacation school, the building up of its curriculum and the production of its text books. The authors of this book have already demonstrated their ability to deal with the methods and problems of religious education. Professor Stout has made a fundamental study of the organization and administration of religious education in general. Mr. Thompson has had a wide and successful experience as a teacher, as a background for his recent activities in the realm of organized Christian work among young people. In this book they have together interpreted and reduced to practice the experience of thousands of vacation school teachers and workers, with the result that all those who are interested in the daily vacation church school will be instructed and stimulated by reading and studying this volume.

THOMAS ST. CLAIR EVANS.

EDITOR'S FOREWORD

THE daily vacation church school is here to stay. That this is true may be assumed from the very nature of the situation; for it is incredible that the church, awakening as it is to the unparalleled fruitfulness of the educational method in religion, will ever again allow the loss of so much precious time as ordinarily goes to waste in the long vacation period of the public schools. That the vacation church school is here to stay is also evidenced by its constant increase, during the last decade in numbers and efficiency in all parts of the country.

This rather sudden rise of what is virtually a new organization within the church places upon the parent institution great responsibilities, which it is struggling earnestly to meet. At the present time the Protestant churches in this country number their vacation schools by thousands, and the number is rapidly increasing. Such schools, differing as they must from the Sunday school, lack precedent to direct them; they are without central organizations within the denominations for their guidance; they must define their aims, create their curriculum, build their program, set up their standards, determine their methods, provide their teachers and administrators. Surely a major task among the great enterprises now engaging the attention of the church.

To help on these crucial points is the purpose of the present volume. Written as it is by authors

thoroughly trained in the principles of educational method as used by the church, and richly experienced in the practical administration of religious education in church schools, the book contains a maximum of concrete and practical helpfulness.

The volume is designed primarily for organizers and administrators. Its valuable information, fruitful suggestions, definite directions, and proved principles should also be made a part of the equipment of every vacation school teacher. Pastors can well afford to consider the point of view of its pages in planning the program of their church. Directors of religious education will welcome its ripe wisdom.

Two definite lines of direction are being taken in the development of the vacation church school movement: *one*, the strictly *denominational* type of school run by a single local church or by two or more adjacent churches of the same denomination uniting for the enterprise; *the other*, the *interdenominational* type, conducted jointly by a number of churches of a community without regard to denominations. The present volume is strictly non-denominational in plan and purpose, and the principles and programs it sets forth are equally applicable to churches of all denominations, whether acting singly or in conjunction with other churches.

GEORGE H. BETTS.

CHAPTER I

ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE VACATION SCHOOL

VACATION church schools are comparatively new. Though they have recently had a very rapid growth and are rendering a great service to thousands of children, they are still unknown in most churches and communities. Each year since their beginning an increasing number of schools have been held. Such schools should be established in many churches and communities which do not now have them. Much can be done in accomplishing this if their benefits are made known and intelligent effort made to secure the cooperation of churches in establishing them.

Origin of vacation church schools.—These schools were first established about twenty years ago. As already said, an increasing number have been held each year since that time. In making a study of their origin and rapid growth one is reminded of the rise and early development of the Sunday school. Both types of schools were founded in response to a very real need. Each demonstrated at once that it was ministering in a most wholesome way to children who were not being adequately cared for by other agencies. In each case, the success of the first schools to be set up was apparent and a few other communities hastened to establish them. Later the growth became more rapid and now the Sunday school enrolls many millions

of children. Enrollment last year in the vacation schools, from the small beginning of twenty years ago, had increased to approximately five hundred thousand in this country, to say nothing of the number enrolled in foreign countries.

The early vacation schools in their origin remind us also of the early Pestalozzian schools. Pestalozzi, the great Swiss educator, established his first school to meet the needs of the children in his village. They were idle and were not properly cared for by the homes or other agencies of the village. Pestalozzi gathered these, about twenty in number, into his own home and thus began one of the greatest educational movements in the entire history of education. It might well be said that this great movement had its beginning in the love of this man for children and his desire to be of service to them. He said he wanted to "psychologize education." By this he meant that he wished to adapt the means and methods of education to the needs and capacities of children. Pestalozzian schools, as they were called, developed rapidly in several European countries, and the movement had a profound influence upon the elementary schools of our own country.

It cannot be said, of course, at this time that vacation schools will have any such world-wide development as the Sunday school and the Pestalozzian schools have had. Time alone will tell whether any such fame and spread await them. But it is interesting to note that each of these types of schools had its origin in an attempt to meet the needs of children—physical, mental, and spiritual—who were not being properly cared for by other agencies.

Returning to the vacation school, the exact date and place of the first school is in dispute. According to "1921 Facts," issued by the International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools, "the movement was founded in New York in 1901 by the Rev. Robert G. Boville . . . whose attention was drawn to the need of bringing together idle children, idle churches, and idle students for community welfare on the East Side." Mrs. Stafford, in the preface of her book *The Vacation Religious Day School* (1920), says: "The institution known as the religious day school . . . originated fully twenty years ago in certain pastors' classes held in northwestern Wisconsin, conducted by the Rev. H. R. Vaughan, a Congregational minister, then located at Elk Mound." It is not improbable that each of the movements indicated above had an independent origin. In any event, the movement started by Dr. Boville early took on a definite form and spread very rapidly. Out of this has developed a great organization which has been more influential in the progress of the daily vacation school than any other single agency if, indeed, not all other agencies combined. In 1907 the National Vacation Bible School Committee was formed. Four years later it was incorporated under the laws of the State of New York as the "Daily Vacation Bible School Association." In 1916, it was reorganized as the International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools. This, in brief, is the history of the organization that has been chiefly responsible for the development of the vacation school in this country and its spread to foreign countries.

Present status of the school.—It is not possible

to state the exact number of vacation schools held last year. Estimates based upon the best information available place the number at about five thousand. Approximately five hundred thousand children were enrolled. Both the number of schools and enrollment constitute convincing evidence of the importance and vitality of the vacation school movement. These figures do not, perhaps, justify us in saying conclusively that the school is a permanent institution. But they do enable us to say that it is ministering to the needs of many thousands of children; and further, if the needs continue to exist and the school continues to meet them, it seems entirely reasonable to assume that its permanency is assured.

Space does not permit us to discuss in detail the present status. Only a few facts will be pointed out. No uniformity exists in length of term. It ranges, in general, from two to six weeks. There are, perhaps, a few schools holding longer terms. Four or five weeks probably constitute the average. Lack of uniformity also exists in the matter of daily time schedule. Some schools hold only a brief session consisting of one or two hours each day; others continue throughout the forenoon; and still others hold both forenoon and afternoon sessions. In the matter of suitability of buildings and equipment, great differences are found. Where public school buildings are used, favorable conditions usually exist. In case churches are used, the contrary is generally true. On the whole, when buildings other than public schools or churches are used, their equipment is inadequate.

Many individual exceptions to these statements

concerning buildings and equipment no doubt exist, but in the large majority of cases, what has been said holds true. Nothing can be said here concerning curriculum except that there is a wide range of difference in ideals, the subject matter taught, and activities carried on. The financial support given to the schools is in general much below what it should be. Far too many schools have practically no funds provided, and a large number of others have such meager support that they must of necessity lack the necessary equipment and supplies. In general, teachers lack training and experience, and supervision is wholly inadequate.

The future of vacation schools.—The foregoing brief discussion of present status should not be interpreted as any reflection upon the good work being done by many schools. Taking into account the limitation under which they carry on their work, very satisfactory results are being accomplished. The value of the service they are rendering should not be underestimated. But the fact remains that a large number of schools are carrying on their work under very serious handicap. Permanent success for these schools is highly improbable unless conditions are made more favorable. For example, funds adequate to the actual needs of the schools must be provided. A supply of competent teachers will have to be secured. Better standards for curriculum making are imperative. Length of term should be more uniform, and the longer term rather than the shorter one now in vogue should become the practice. Adequate supervision is absolutely necessary. Aims or objectives

need to be more vital and more clearly defined, and will have to be worked out and applied intelligently in determining the means and methods employed by the school. And, finally, provision must be made for testing results in order to improve practice through experience.

If these things can be accomplished in reasonable degree, the vacation school will become an increasingly useful agency in the moral and spiritual upbuilding of our children and youth.

CHAPTER II

WHAT SHOULD VACATION SCHOOLS SEEK TO DO?

In the preceding chapter a brief sketch was given of the vacation school movement. It is evident that some good purpose is being accomplished, otherwise these schools would not continue year after year in the same church and community. New schools would not continue to be organized at such a rapid rate if the spiritual need of churches and communities were not being met.

This leads us to inquire, What are vacation schools accomplishing? But securing this information alone is not enough. We need also to inquire, What should they seek to do in order to be most useful? Perhaps some of them are not as successful as others. If so, this may be due to a lack of information on the part of those in charge concerning what the schools should seek to do. In any event, the aims or objectives of the vacation school should be given careful consideration. This is true of any school. No school is justified which does not meet some of the educational needs of the community which supports it. And this means, of course, that it must contribute in certain definite ways to the welfare of childhood and youth.

What should a vacation school seek to do? This question cannot be finally answered in any single statement. It might be said, for example, that it

should seek to build character, which, of course, is true. But this general statement alone is not sufficiently specific to guide us in doing the many things required in organizing and conducting a school. A program will have to be planned. This means selecting subject matter to be taught and activities to be carried on. What definite purposes shall we have in mind when choosing subject matter and activities? Methods of teaching must be employed and devices used. Here, again, specific aims must serve as guides in both selection and use. Housing and equipment will have to be provided. How can we know what is needed unless certain definite purposes guide us? In seeking to answer these questions, the opportunities peculiar to the vacation school will be taken up first and, following that, a consideration of those which it has in common with other religious agencies.

Vacation time used to good advantage.—One of the purposes of a vacation school is to make fruitful use of time that, without this school, would be wasted and even worse than wasted by the children. When the public schools close, children, particularly in large towns and cities, have nothing to do throughout a long vacation. Many people think that a part, at least, of this time should be used for educational purposes. Not a few public schools are now holding summer sessions. Some of the children enrolled make up work in which they have failed during the year. Others find it possible by attending a few weeks each summer to shorten the time required for completing their regular school work. All are given opportunity to find happy and wholesome employment instead of being idle. It can be

said, then, that one of the purposes of a vacation school of any kind is to make it possible for children *to use time profitably which would otherwise be spent in idleness.* The time must, of course, be used profitably, or the holding of the school would not be justified.

Buildings and equipment used that would otherwise be idle.—This is one of the arguments used for these schools, and it seems to be a reasonable one. Why should public schools, churches, and other buildings, such as community houses and parish houses, be idle during the summer? Why should they not be used for the good of the children? Why, for example, should the churches remain closed throughout the week when many of the children have no place to carry on their activities except in the street? In the aggregate, large sums of money are invested in church buildings and equipment. When these can be made to serve a good purpose it is only the part of wisdom to make them do so. This is not the only reason for maintaining vacation schools or even the most important one, but answering the question, Why vacation schools? it should be taken into account.

The health and happiness of children promoted.—We have now come to a consideration of the actual benefits which the children may derive from the school. It is certainly worth while for the church and the community to support any agency that will promote the physical welfare of the children. Any school which does not do this is not worthy of support. No kind of educational program is complete which does not include some provision for health instruction and activities. When

we take into account the kind of homes from which many of the children come who attend vacation schools, the need of this is apparent. They need to be taught how to care for their bodies. Bodies need to be built up and made strong by play carried on under wholesome conditions. Cleanliness needs to be taught and practiced. Habits relating to the care of the body should be developed through repeated activities under proper direction. Since it is one of the purposes of all schools to do these things, vacation schools should also do their part in promoting the health and physical welfare of children.

Whoever invests time or money in making a child happy makes a good investment. Happiness promotes the development of the body. This is emphasized by physicians in the case of young children and even babies. They urge mothers and nurses to keep the children happy in order that they may grow more rapidly. Happiness also contributes to the right kind of mental development. Lessons are learned more easily and better remembered when children are happy. Habits are formed more rapidly when activities are pleasurable. Spiritual development in children can hardly be expected if they are unhappy in their surroundings. It is a matter of great importance that they associate God and Christ, the church and the Bible, the school and its work with pleasant experiences. The writer recalls the advice given many years ago to a teacher by the director of a country school. The teacher was young and inexperienced. The director had through the years employed many teachers. On the first morning of the new term he said to the

young teacher, "I have only one thing to say to you, *make the children like school.*" This was good advice for any teacher. If children like school we thereby add greatly to their happiness, and they in turn will respond readily to the work of the school.

As pointed out in a preceding paragraph, it is very necessary that religion be associated in the mind of the child with pleasurable experiences. Otherwise wrong attitudes will be developed, right motives will not be inculcated, and right conduct will not result. The vacation school has an advantage over the Sunday school in having more time each day at its disposal. It is, therefore, possible for it to include in its program play, games, and other forms of recreation.

Development of Christian character the real objective of the vacation school.—This does not mean that other objectives are not worthy. It does mean that any church school which does not result in building Christian character has failed to fulfill its real purpose. Time should be devoted to this end; buildings and equipment be dedicated to this purpose; and subject matter and activities be used for this accomplishment. All the activities of the school should be made to contribute to the upbuilding of the spiritual life of children. This is the inclusive answer to our question, What should the vacation school seek to do? Analysis of this answer will now be attempted in order to understand its meaning as fully as possible. Before doing so let us consider the unique opportunity afforded the vacation schools for supplementing the work of other schools.

The public school does not teach religion and

cannot do so under existing conditions. This is no reflection upon the public school as an institution or upon the fine Christian character of a large majority of public school teachers. It is merely the statement of a fact. The vacation school must supplement the public school's splendid work by doing something which it cannot do. The Sunday school is doing a very valuable work, but here again its work needs to be supplemented. In the first place it is fair to say that two out of three in the average community do not attend Sunday school. Many of these children attend vacation schools in communities where they are maintained. If it were not for the vacation schools such children would have no opportunity to receive religious instruction. It should certainly be one of our great objectives to provide for the religious nurture of these children.

The vacation school can render a great service also to the children who do attend Sunday school. On an average, they receive less than thirty periods of instruction per year. A vacation school conducted for five days a week for a period of five weeks can utilize more time than the Sunday school in an entire year. This is not said in criticism of the Sunday school. It is merely a statement of fact to point out the great opportunity at the command of the vacation school which it should utilize to the fullest extent possible. The work of the Sunday school is in great need of being supplemented and the vacation school can in some degree, at least, meet this need.

From the standpoint of the neglect of religious instruction in the home, the vacation school can

render a valuable service. It is very probable, if indeed not quite certain, that many of the children enrolled receive little or no religious instruction in their homes. In some cases, perhaps many, their parents do not send them to any other school of religious instruction, but they do send them to the vacation school. At any rate they come in large numbers. This gives a great opportunity to the vacation school and definitely places a great responsibility upon it.

Attention will now be directed to making the analysis referred to in a previous paragraph. In doing this it is necessary to speak in terms of what we want the child to acquire and become day by day. The more definite our goals are in any kind of educational procedure, the better they serve us. Specific aims serve as useful guides in making our program, in securing proper equipment, and in choosing methods and devices in teaching. What are these specific aims which are to serve as guides in the daily work of the school?

First of all, we want the children to acquire *fruitful knowledge.* By this we mean knowledge that will result in building character. Neither the disposition to do right nor ability to do right can arise out of ignorance. We should not expect the child to want to do right until he knows what *is* right. Neither should we expect him *to be able* to do right until he knows *how. Right conduct has to be learned.* A little later we shall see how knowledge gets over into conduct. It is our purpose here merely to emphasize the fact that one of the things we seek is to have the child acquire fruitful knowledge.

The acquiring of knowledge is one of the clearly defined aims of all modern education. Stated more specifically, the aim is not knowledge for its own sake but for what it will accomplish in the life of the child. As a result, public school curricula have been greatly modified and enriched. Nature study, hygiene, language, geography, and history have been added to the three R's of the old elementary school. Information and experience having to do with religion cannot be left out. Recognizing this, Sunday school curricula are being enriched by the selection of subject matter better adapted to the needs and capacities of the child. Week-day schools of religious instruction are being organized in many places. In many of these schools children are using textbooks equal in every respect to the textbooks used in the public schools. These facts are being recited to show that we are placing increasing emphasis upon knowledge as an important factor in religious education.

The vacation schools then, in common with other schools both secular and religious, must provide instruction that will result in the child acquiring fruitful knowledge. It occurs to us at once that a knowledge of the Bible must constitute one of the aims of religious education. Unfortunately, multitudes of children are growing up in ignorance of its great spiritual truths. It is one of the sources of information about God and his dealings with his children. But it is not the only source. Nature all about reveals him if we are made to see aright. The stories of the lives of Christian men and women so abundant in history and literature are other sources of information. The lives of Livingstone

and Grenfell and countless other men, and women too, furnish abundant material. It is not our purpose here to discuss subject matter. Our purpose rather is to emphasize the fact that a knowledge of God and his world and of Christ and his teachings, of the lives of devoted Christian men and women, must constitute one of the main objectives of the vacation school. Further discussion of the knowledge essential in character building will be found in Chapter VII.

Another thing we should seek to accomplish is the development of *attitudes*, *interests*, *ideals*, and *motives*. These constitute one of the results of knowledge gained and experience acquired. The child is developing attitudes and interests of one kind or another. Attitudes toward honesty, reverence, truthfulness, and loyalty are being formed. Interests are being developed both in and out of school. Whether they are wholesome or otherwise is a matter of great importance. The vacation school must assume its share of responsibility at this point.

Right ideals of duty, honesty, truthfulness, sacrifice, and of service, do not just happen. Neither do wrong ideals. Both result from education, using the word in a broad sense. That is to say, they are built up through knowledge gained and experience acquired. Unfortunately, children too frequently acquire wrong ideals at home, on the playground, in the street, and sometimes even in the school. They do this because of ignorance, or wrong kind of knowledge. All too frequently children are not given a fair chance to form right ideals. It is the peculiar function of the teacher of religion to see that they have a fair chance. Here again the vaca-

tion school must assume its full share of responsibility. This can be done only by setting up definite ideals to be cultivated, and providing opportunity for them to find expression in daily living. One of the tests which determine whether knowledge is fruitful is found at this point. If it does not result in right ideals and in their proper expression, it has failed in large part in being useful in the life of the child.

We are not, of course, seeking ideals merely as ends. They must serve as means in creating right *motives*, in order that we may secure right conduct. The peculiar function of religious education is to develop these motives and have them carry over into conduct. The vacation school should, therefore, at all times place emphasis upon those activities which will give the children experience in right living.

Conduct is largely a matter of *habit.* Someone has said, "Habits result in character and character in destiny." Ideals of right living must carry over into habits of right conduct. It is only thus that motives really get into daily living. Childhood is peculiarly a period of habit forming. This goes on whether we will or no. Every thought and every act has a tendency to repeat itself and become fixed in the life of the child. This is especially true of an act if it is pleasurable. The child must not only be taught religion but must be given opportunity to make it a part of his daily life. Children form habits of reverence, truth telling, and honesty quite as readily as they do habits of irreverence, lying, and dishonesty. It happens too frequently that they form the bad habits because a fair chance is not given them to form the good ones.

The vacation school certainly must have *habit forming* as one of its chief aims. More particularly its work should seek to develop habits of *reverence, worship, prayer,* and *definite acts of service.* Worship programs should be carefully planned and carried out. In this relation, as elsewhere, habits are formed by what the children do themselves. They must actively participate in the worship exercises. The writer knows of a Sunday school where the spirit of an entire department has been changed by the right kind of a worship program in which the children actively participate. They have formed habits of reverence, responsiveness, helpfulness, and good order. These find expression not only during the worship period but in the classrooms as well.

The importance of good habits is not, of course, measured wholly or even chiefly by conduct in the school itself. We should not seek to build up merely school habits but *life* habits. They must be made to carry over and find expression in the home, on the playground, in the street, and wherever children live in their day by day contacts. Many of the vacation schools have, in theory at least, rightly emphasized habit formation. But children do not form habits merely by talking to them about it. "Talks" and "lessons" *about* habits are useful only when they result in action. For example, if children are to form the habit of brushing their teeth they must perform this act *at definite times day after day.* If they are to form habits of acts of service they must *actually* and *repeatedly perform these acts.* The same thing can be said of habits of cleanliness, reverence, prayer, and worship. Repeated activity, and this alone, results in habit.

CHAPTER III

PREPARING THE CHURCH AND COMMUNITY FOR THE VACATION SCHOOL

We have considered in Chapter II the purposes of the vacation school. These will serve as guides in making a program, in determining time schedules, in arranging for suitable buildings and equipment, and in formulating standards for measuring results. In the meantime, however, the interest and support of the people of the church and community must be secured. A vacation church school, like any other school, cannot succeed unless the children enroll and attend regularly and punctually. They will not do so unless public sentiment is created favorable to the school. Funds will have to be raised. This will not be possible if the people are not informed about the purposes of the school and the benefits to the children to be derived from it. *Creating favorable public opinion* is one of the tasks, sometimes a rather difficult one, of those who attempt to establish and maintain vacation schools. Any kind of public institution to be successful must have hearty public support.

The school must, of course, be made to appeal to parents. Others in the community interested in the welfare of children must also be appealed to. The active interest and cordial support of ministers is necessary. The support should be secured of

public-spirited men and women, particularly those who are leaders in educational, religious, and philanthropic enterprises. In every church and community there are always certain *key* men and women whose interest in any public undertaking is essential to its success. The school must be brought to their attention in such a way as to arouse interest and enlist cooperation. On what basis can we make successful appeal to parents, ministers, and others whose cooperation must be secured?

People are always interested in the welfare of children. This gives us a starting point. If they become persuaded that any enterprise will benefit children they will support it. It, therefore, follows that we should get their attention fixed upon the fact that the school proposes to do something for the children which needs to be done. When a church or community becomes convinced of this, a very important step has been taken in establishing and maintaining a successful vacation school. Without this no permanent success can be hoped for.

Information must be supplied.—It goes without saying that the person or persons responsible for arousing interest and enlisting cooperation in setting up a vacation school must have full information themselves. They must know definitely the needs of the children which the school can supply. How many children in the community can be served by the school? What is the probable enrollment providing parents and others become interested? Are the available buildings accessible to the children? Were schools conducted last year? If so, how successful were they? What were the causes of success or failure? How much will it cost to maintain the

school? For what purpose will funds be needed and how much for each item? What is the proposed length of term?—three, five, or six weeks—or shorter or longer term? Are the aims clearly enough in mind to explain them to those who have a right to know? What is the program of instruction and activities? These are some of the things which must be known by those who are seeking support for the school. Some of this information can be gained only by making a systematic, careful survey of the community. Some of it can be secured by having a knowledge of successful vacation schools in other communities.

In this connection it should be remembered that the people of many churches and communities know little or nothing about church vacation schools. If they have not been held before in the community this will certainly be true; for the undertaking, in that case, will be entirely new. Even if such schools have previously been conducted, it should not be assumed that the people are well informed. Inquiry may reveal that the enrollment was comparatively small and that only a few people had knowledge of the school and interest in it. Possibly the school was not successful because of small enrollment, irregular attendance, or bad management. If so, this handicap will have to be overcome by convincing the people, by presenting *facts*, that a vacation school can be made successful. On the other hand, if the schools already held were successful, this fact should be made known and be used to enlist interest and support for the present enterprise.

Mere statement of the fact that vacation schools

have been successful in this community or others will not be sufficient. We shall have to explain in some detail what they have actually accomplished. For example, the writer knows the director of a week-day church school who has built up a large and successful school from a very small beginning. He has succeeded in doing this largely because he has been able to tell the people very definitely what the school is accomplishing. No other kind of advertising is as valuable as this. But we must have the facts and use them in such a way as to make our appeal convincing.

Various methods employed in furnishing information.—Definite means will have to be used to secure attention of people. One of the fundamental principles in advertising of any kind is, *get the attention of those whom we want to interest* in our project. It holds good here as elsewhere. Its application to the matter in hand requires careful preparation. We must not only have the information to give the people, but ways must be found to get it to them. The next thing to consider is how to present it in such way as to *enlist interest* and *secure action*. Our purpose, of course, is not merely to spread information but to get certain definite things done.

Before suggesting some of the ways which may be used in getting things done, a few words of caution will be given. It should not be assumed that every one in the community will immediately respond enthusiastically. Time will be required. Begin as early as possible in the campaign of publicity. Avoid by all possible means giving the impression that the proposal for the school is being brought in from the outside. On the contrary, the people of the church

and the community should be made to feel that it is *their* undertaking. None of us like to have things "put over on us," so to speak, by outsiders or even by insiders. It is very important, therefore, that methods of publicity be used in such a way as to create a feeling of responsibility on the part of all the people whose cooperation is desired in establishing and conducting the school.

Various methods will be found useful in preparing the church and community for the school. No set of hard and fast rules of procedure can be followed. Communities differ in size, character of population, and in other ways. If the school is to be conducted by a single church, this will call for one way of going about the task. In case several churches are expected to cooperate, a somewhat different way will have to be followed. The point here is simply this, *local conditions will have to be thoroughly understood, and methods will have to be adapted to fit these conditions.*

A few suggestions follow concerning how to proceed:

1. *Personal contacts.* We have already spoken of certain classes of persons whose cooperation must be secured. It will be necessary to get into personal contact with them. Ministers, public school teachers, and other "key people" in the community and church should be consulted. This is one very effective method of securing valuable information concerning the local situation. Talk the matter over with these individuals very frankly. Explain the purpose of the school and seek their advice and counsel regarding further procedure. Solicit them personally to assume responsibility for doing

certain things in a preliminary way which need to be done in order to get the attention of the people and arouse interest. For example, the matter needs to be "talked up." Ask these persons called upon if they will talk to their friends and associates about the school. Ministers should be asked to present the matter to their congregations. Teachers can exert an influence by telling the children something about vacation schools. Others will be useful in one way or another in spreading information. If some preliminary work of this kind can be done, it will lay the foundation for public meetings, newspaper publicity, and other means of disseminating information.

2. *Group meetings.* When individuals have been called upon and their interest enlisted it may be well to call a group meeting. This should be done by one or more of those who will attend the meeting. Here plans can be talked over, and suggestions made for carrying forward the work of creating general interest in the school. Some kind of temporary organization should be set up at this meeting. One or more committees will probably need to be appointed to arrange for a public meeting or some other means of publicity. This group meeting should result in definite action of some kind so that several people will become active in promoting the interests of the school.

3. *Public meetings.* Utilize public meetings being held for other purposes. By means of these announcements can be made and brief presentation of the merits of the schools secured. As indicated above, ministers may be willing to devote all or a part of a public service to a presentation of the

benefits of the school. One or more public meetings called specifically in the interests of the school may be desirable. In all cases where such meetings are called they should be carefully planned for. Sufficient publicity should be given to the meeting. Definite plans should be made to secure the attendance of parents and others upon whom the success of the school will depend. The program for the meeting should be arranged in advance, and planned to accomplish certain definite purposes. Such a meeting is a good place to have some definite action taken concerning the establishment of the school. This is particularly true if several churches are to cooperate in carrying on the enterprise. Committees may be appointed and other definite plans made to provide the necessary permanent organization.

4. *Newspaper publicity.* In the case of one week-day church school known to the writer, the newspaper in the community was a great help in establishing the school. It published announcements of public meetings and articles written by the director and others. Through it the people learned of the work of week-day schools in other places. Editorials were also used to call the attention of the people to the need of such a school in that community. Where the support of newspapers can be secured it should be utilized.

5. *Placards and pamphlets.* These are used very effectively in some communities. Placards should be made in such way as to attract attention. They should make one or two points stand out clearly and be so placed throughout the community that they will come to the attention of those for whom

they are intended. In the use of this method of advertising as well as all others, we should keep definitely in mind *the particular persons whose interest we desire to secure.* What will attract their attention? What will interest them? What will arouse them to do the things we want them to do? These questions should be kept constantly in mind to serve as guides in what we say and how we say it.

Pamphlets are useful in various ways. They enable us to state clearly the purposes of the school, its financial needs and other important items of information. What is said should be said briefly and to the point. Long statements will probably not be read. Main facts should stand out clearly on the page. The paper used should be of good quality and the print clear. Some of the points discussed in the preceding paragraph will apply here.

Other methods and devices will suggest themselves. All of those mentioned here will not probably be used in any one place. Choice should be made of the method or methods which will be most useful, taking into account the particular local situation. The point to keep in mind is that information must be furnished and in such manner as to secure action. We want the support of public opinion. By this we mean that part of the public upon which reliance must be placed for the success of the school. It goes without saying that parents are included in this public. The leadership of the church, including of course the minister, must give hearty support, or the enterprise will fail. There may be other persons not included in these two classes whose interest and support are needed. In

what may be called the promotion campaign, the persons whom we desire to interest must be kept clearly in mind.

A brief discussion is perhaps in place here concerning the whole of the matter of publicity as it relates to preparing the church and the community. People are being called upon to support many community enterprises. Churches are besieged to support this thing or that. Funds are being sought for all sorts of purposes. It, therefore, requires both intelligence and effort to secure attention and arouse interest. The vacation school, like all other worthy enterprises, must stand on its merits. Its merits must be presented clearly and forcefully. Publicity given to it must have a "pull." The benefits it will bestow upon the children and the community must be made to stand out. This does not mean that we are to use cheap *claptrap* or *sensational* methods. Quite the contrary is true. Any institution whose purpose is the moral and spiritual upbuilding of childhood and youth does not need to resort to such methods. In fact, it cannot do so and succeed permanently. We can ill afford to use any method that will cheapen the school and bring it into disrepute. Permanent respect is worth far more than temporary support secured under false pretenses. Let us use methods that will secure respect and support, both of which will be permanent.

CHAPTER IV

SETTING UP THE ORGANIZATION

In getting ready to conduct a vacation school some kind of organization has to be set up. The kind and extent of organization will not, of course, be the same in all cases. But certain things have to be done in conducting a school which require cooperative effort. Cooperation requires organization of some kind. This is true whether the school is large or small, whether it is conducted by a single church or several churches cooperating.

Too much organization is probably quite as bad as too little. Mark Twain's story of the steamboat is a case in point. The whistle was so large that the boat had to be stopped in order to blow it. There wasn't enough steam in the boiler for both the whistle and the cylinders. Only so much organization should be set up as is needed to conduct the school. By organization we mean definite plans of procedure and the selection of suitable persons who have certain duties to perform. Some of these do their work inside the school and others outside. One person at least, the principal who has immediate charge of the school, performs duties both inside the school and outside as well.

In going about it to set up an organization, some of the questions which we should have constantly before us are, What are the things which need to be done? How many people are necessary to do these things? What particular persons are best

fitted to do them? How shall they be organized into working groups to secure the best results from their work?

Let us turn to a consideration of some of the things which have to be done in setting up the organization which we call the school. A part of this will be within the school itself and a part of it will consist of persons who are to establish and conduct it.

Enrollment of pupils.—Every effort should be made to secure the enrollment on the first day of all the children who will attend the school. The work of too many vacation schools is greatly hindered because of failure at this point. Children who enter late lose much of the benefit of the school. If any considerable proportion of them enter late, this seriously interferes with the work of those who enroll promptly at the opening of the term. An increasing enrollment is perhaps better than a decreasing one; but neither should be regarded as the sign of a successful school. Make the first day as well as every other day count for the most.

In order to do this plans will have to be made in advance of the day for opening the school. It is very desirable to know as accurately as possible several days in advance how many will be enrolled. We should also know their ages and the public school grade to which they belong. Without this information it is quite impossible to make definite plans for the work of the school. For example, without this knowledge, how shall we know what kind of program we need? Instruction material will have to be selected, worship programs planned, materials for handwork purchased, and other neces-

sary supplies secured. Classrooms will have to be provided and the number of teachers that will be required should be known. When we go over the matter carefully and make a list of the things to be done which depend upon the number and ages of the pupils enrolled, the importance of having this information in advance is seen at once.

The most important thing in this connection is to get in touch with parents. Several devices may be used to secure the information. Make out an enrollment card calling for the necessary information, as name of parent, name of child, residence, age, public school grade, and the like. Provide enough of these printed or typewritten cards for the parents. Secure permission from the public school to distribute them among the children with the request that they be taken home and returned next day with the information requested. The Sunday schools may be used for a like purpose. If a list of names and addresses can be secured they could be mailed directly to them. In case this method is used, inclose addressed and stamped envelope for return. When this information is secured it should be properly tabulated as a basis for making necessary plans for the opening day of the school. It may turn out that all the pupils whose names you have on the list will not appear. Others whose names have not been secured will probably be present, but this number should be reduced to a minimum by systematically planning to secure full enrollment. Some minor changes may have to be made, but this will not seriously interfere with carrying out the plans already made for the first day.

Grading or grouping pupils.—Definite plans have to be made for properly grouping pupils. The precise plan will, of course, depend somewhat upon the number and ages of pupils, equipment at hand, and kind of building available. In other types of schools we find several plans in use. The public school usually groups children according to age. For example, children six years of age are found in the first grade, seven years in the second, eight years in the third, and so on. In week-day church schools the practice is quite common to place children of the first and second public school grades together in what is called *group one* and so on. This is not done because this method of grouping is better than that of the public school. It is used because of small enrollment or for some other reason which makes it impossible or at least very difficult to follow the public school plan of grading pupils.

The Sunday school uses a plan of grouping not used by the public school and not usually found in the week-day church school. This is what is called *departmental* grouping. For example, the primary department is composed of pupils six, seven, and eight years of age, the junior department, nine, ten, and eleven and so on, each department, except the beginners, consisting of *three public school grades.* Small Sunday schools frequently have no other plan of grading. The larger schools usually have the department groups for purposes of general exercises and worship, and classes or grades corresponding to the public school plan for purposes of instruction.

Which of these plans is preferable for the vacation school? Or what combination of plans will

secure the best results? Let it be said here that just because it is a vacation school does not make it less necessary to have the pupils properly grouped or graded. In any kind of school this depends upon certain definite things which must be taken into account. We know, for example, that for good *classroom work* it is necessary to have pupils of about the same age. It is better to have pupils six years of age in one group, those of seven in another, and those of eight in still another than it is to have six, seven, and eight-year-olds all in one group. The wider the range of ages the more difficult it is to adapt subject matter and methods to the interests, needs, and capacities of children. On the other hand, for purposes of general exercises and worship, Sunday schools find departmental grouping quite satisfactory. In case of certain kinds of social and recreational activities the same thing is true. Space will not permit us to consider here the reasons for this. The point to be emphasized is this, *the kind of work to be carried on* is one of the things which determine whether pupils of the same age should be grouped together or whether a wider range of ages can be included.

The number of pupils enrolled in the school is another factor that determines the grouping of pupils. A small number of pupils of a rather wide range of ages will not permit of what is called "close grading." For example, if there should be only three or four pupils of nine years of age, the same number ten and the same number eleven, it would not be possible, certainly not desirable, to form three class groups. One class consisting of ten to twelve pupils would be far better than three, or even two,

each having a smaller number. Classes must not be too small as well as not too large. In many of our Sunday schools classes are too small for effective work. On the other hand, if we have enough children nine years of age to form a medium size class, say ten to fifteen, the class should be formed. The same should be said of a ten year or any other age group. In the case of small children, not as many, perhaps, should be placed in one class.

The number and size of groups of children which can be advantageously formed in the vacation school depends upon several other practical considerations. Length and arrangement of time schedule is one of them. The number of teachers available is another. Building space and its arrangement is still another. A good way to plan for the grading of pupils is this. Provide for such grouping as seems most desirable if all the conditions will permit. Then modify the plan in accordance with the actual conditions which have to be met.

Making a program.—This will be discussed in a later chapter. Mention of it is made here to call attention to the fact that the making of a definite, well-planned program constitutes a part of the task of setting up the organization.

Selecting teachers.—Among the important things in setting up an organization, selecting teachers is one of the most important. "As is the teacher so is the school" is a very true statement. This is so whether one teacher or more than one is required. It is true whether we are discussing vacation schools or some other kind of school.

Teachers should be *selected* and not merely employed. They should be chosen wholly on a *basis*

of their fitness for the task and not accepted for service merely because they are available. It should make no difference whether they are paid or unpaid for their service. Unfortunately it probably will make some difference in our ability to get good teachers if no provision is made for compensation. In any case, children are extremely unfortunate who have poor teachers. Whether they are paid or not does not help the children any. If the payment of a salary helps to secure good teachers, and the writer believes it does, then every effort should be made to provide for reasonable compensation.

Teachers should be selected in advance. It will not do to wait until the day before school opens and then scurry around to find teachers. There are two reasons for this. One is that we must be sure that we have the best teachers available and in sufficient number to carry on the work of the school. This requires time; it is not a last-minute job. A second reason is that the teachers will probably require some training for the work they are expected to do. It is likely that some of them will not have had previous training or experience. Others, perhaps all, will not be familiar with the aims and program of a vacation school. This whole question will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.

What are the sources of supply for teachers in vacation schools? Public school teachers are sometimes available. College students returning to the home town for the vacation period may be called upon. Successful Sunday school teachers may be willing to teach in the vacation school. Ministers

sometimes find it possible to devote a few hours a week to the work of the school. Others in the community, particularly those who are former public school teachers, may be qualified and willing to serve. As previously stated, teachers should be selected wholly on a basis of their fitness to do the things which the success of the vacation school requires.

Qualifications of teachers.—There are certain personal characteristics that anyone must possess who is expected to do effective work with children. A successful teacher must have a winning personality, capacity to make adaptations readily to the demands of the school, and devotion to the best interests of the children. It is to be assumed that anyone who is employed to teach religion should possess a vital religious life. In addition to this personal religious experience a teacher should have an abiding intelligent interest in this form of Christian service. The work of the teacher is such that nothing can take the place of the personal factor. Nothing can be substituted for kindness, sympathy, patience, love for children, and self-control. This is true in the case of any kind of teaching and particularly of the teaching of religion.

From the standpoint of academic and professional preparation and experience, teachers in vacation schools should be as well qualified as the best teachers in the public schools. Personal qualities cannot take the place of the knowledge of the subject matter to be taught and of effective methods of teaching. Whether teaching has advanced to the stage of being a profession may be an open question; but it is at least a highly specialized

vocation. The knowledge of what to teach and how to teach must be acquired by study and experience.

Certain specific qualifications should be taken into account in selecting teachers for the vacation schools. Story telling, music, craft work, recreational leadership, conducting worship and carrying on service activities, all require special types of skill. In case foreign speaking or children of foreign-speaking parents are enrolled, it is highly desirable that at least one of the teachers should be capable of speaking the prevailing language. Unless a person is employed as principal and giving his entire time to administrative work, one of the teachers should be chosen on the basis of capacity to organize and conduct the school.

In setting up the organization it is highly desirable to make some provision for the special training for the teachers. It is very probable, if indeed not certain, that many of the teachers who are employed for the vacation schools will have had no training for the task. Even though some may have had training for public school work they will have had no special preparation for work in religious education. One of several means can be made available for the training of teachers. For example, provision can be made for a training school in the local community some time during the months prior to the opening of the vacation school. In some communities local training schools are maintained for Sunday school and week-day school teachers, and these can be utilized. Other opportunities exist in which training can be secured, such as denominational training schools for definite geographical areas; city training schools under the

auspices of the International Association; church federation schools; community training schools under the local Sunday school council; college Y. M. C. A. and Y. M. C. A. or other student Christian organizations; missionary and other training schools; theological schools. These and other institutions frequently provide during the spring months a brief intensive course for workers in the daily vacation schools.

Providing funds, planning the budget, providing buildings, securing equipment and supplies and planning the daily program, all important matters, will be reserved for later discussion.

We come now to the question of the kind of organization needed to set up the school and make it go. Certain definite duties have been indicated which will have to be performed by persons selected for the purpose. What is everybody's business is nobody's business. Persons will have to be chosen who know definitely what needs to be done. They will also have to be capable of doing these things and willing to do them.

Principal of the school.—Some one person is required to have direct charge of the school. This is true whether we have a one-teacher school or employ several teachers; whether fifty children or less are enrolled or five hundred or more. Some one has to head the work of preparing the church and the community, setting up the organization, planning the budget, and many other such matters. Part of the planning required by the school is rather clearly the work of the teacher. Much of it must be done by some person acting as *organizer* and *supervisor.* For convenience we shall call this per-

son principal. In some places the term director or supervisor is used. How the principal is to be appointed will not be discussed here. But he or she should be duly appointed with certain definite powers and responsibilities. This person will, of course, work under the direction of and be the executive officer of the board discussed in the next section.

Board of Religious Education.—This is the official body having responsibility for the school. It is sometimes called a Committee, or by some other name. Its inclusive duty is to establish and conduct the school. This is true whether the school is to be conducted by a single church or by two or more churches cooperating. If the church already has such a board or committee for its Sunday school, it might serve for the vacation school.

This is frequently the practice and is to be commended. Nothing is to be gained by creating a new organization when one already in existence will serve the purpose. If cooperating churches have a committee for carrying on week-day church schools, it might well serve to set up and conduct the cooperative vacation school. In some communities where such week-day schools are conducted, the same committee or board also have charge of the vacation school. This arrangement, the writer believes, is a very satisfactory one. Here, again, a creation of a new organization is neither necessary nor desirable when an existing organization will serve quite as well.

Individual churches sometimes conduct vacation schools by using the same board or committee as is used for the Sunday school. In any case, how-

ever the appointment may be made, it is desirable to have a small administrative body responsible for the school. This body should consist of from three to seven members duly appointed and invested with the necessary authority by the church or the cooperating churches under whose auspices the school is to be conducted.

The more important duties of this board or committee have already been mentioned. It employs the principal, determines the program, provides buildings and equipment, employs teachers, is responsible for raising funds, prepares the budget, and has general oversight of the school. Many of its duties are delegated to others. For example, it may appoint a finance committee or select one person to secure the funds. Responsibility for securing the use of buildings and providing equipment may be delegated to others. It is a common practice for boards to appoint committees of its own members who are responsible for certain things. For example, there may be a committee on teachers, another on program, and still another on building and equipment.

Responsibility for certain things will, of course, be delegated to the principal. One of these will certainly be the supervision of teachers. The director will also have chief responsibility in making out the program and in taking care of the enrollment and gradation of pupils. Chief responsibility for making out the daily schedule will rest here. He will be consulted in estimating the amount of funds needed, making the budget, listing and purchasing supplies, providing equipment and selecting teachers. Many of the duties delegated to the

principal will be treated at some length in subsequent chapters and will not be discussed here.

In many towns and cities certain so-called overhead organizations exist which may be made to perform important service to the vacation schools. Among these are *church federations*, *ministerial associations*, *daily vacation school associations*, and other similar organizations. Where these exist they should be utilized in creating public sentiment, securing the cooperation of churches, raising funds, and in giving stability and permanency to the enterprise.

Organizations of this type are frequently useful in making adequate supervision possible. For example, an intercommunity organization exists in Lake County, Indiana. Four communities are cooperating in certain ways in conducting week-day schools. Each has its own local board, and these boards constitute a larger board or council, which considers matters of common interest to all the communities. Among other things, this arrangement makes possible a plan for supervising the work of the schools. No one community could afford to employ nor would it need the full time service of a supervisor. All the communities uniting secure full time service, each bearing its share of expense. Similarly several vacation schools can make use of an overhead organization for the same purpose. An organization may be set up for this purpose or one already existing may be made serviceable.

In some churches and communities the organization needed will be more simple than what has been suggested here. In others it may be necessary to extend it. It has been pointed out that organ-

izations already existing either in individual churches or the community may be sufficient for setting up and conducting the school. If so, nothing further will be necessary except to put the organization to work at the task. Whether an organization already in existence is used or whether a new one is created is not important. The thing that is important is to have an organization that will be effective in setting up and conducting the school.

CHAPTER V

PLANNING THE BUDGET AND SECURING FINANCIAL SUPPORT

No successful school can be conducted without funds. The reason for this is that some of the things, at least, which any successful school must have cost money. Even if teachers are to be had without pay, buildings provided free of rent, and the more important items of equipment made available without cost, expenditure of money will still be necessary. Books will have to be purchased, supplies bought, and other items of expense provided for. Our object should not be a cheap school but a good one. Cheap schools are usually poor schools. This is especially so when we set out to make them cheap. Economy should, of course, be practiced. But economy is extremely wasteful when it results in a poor school. It is wasteful of time, effort, and worst of all, of opportunity for the children. A fund must be provided, large or small, as the actual needs may require, for the support of the school.

Responsibility for securing funds.—The board or committee of religious education, or other body having charge of the school should be responsible for securing funds. This responsibility is sometimes delegated to a finance committee or to some person selected for the work. In any case, definite plans must be made in advance to insure that

sufficient funds will be available when needed. This is true regardless of the source from which the funds will come, whether contributed from the church treasury or raised by subscription. The point is that responsibility should be definitely fixed for providing adequate funds for carrying on the work of the school.

Purposes for which funds are needed.—It is possible that not all the items mentioned will apply to every school. Unpaid service on the part of teachers can sometimes be secured. Equipment already provided may be available. A careful study should be made long enough before the date for the opening of the school to ascertain what is needed. When these items are carefully listed, an accurate estimate should be made of the cost of each.

1. *Teachers.* If competent volunteer teachers can be secured this item need not receive further attention. In many cases, however, some compensation will have to be provided. This is true particularly when competent teachers are not available in the local community.

At this point it should be said that the vacation school cannot hope to succeed permanently with unpaid teachers. There may be here and there exceptions to this statement, but in general it holds true. Week-day schools almost everywhere have a paid teaching force. The reasons for this need not be discussed here. All that needs to be said here is that the same reasons exist for paid teachers in the vacation school. Looking to the future, directors of these schools should recognize the necessity of providing funds for teachers' salaries.

2. *Materials of instruction.* This is an important item of expense. Pupils must have materials with which to work. Textbooks are needed and reference material must be provided. Material must be supplied for handwork of various sorts. Teacher's manuals are needed. Maps, charts, and other necessary means of making the work of the school successful should be supplied. No attempt is being made here to give a complete list. This will be presented in more detail in subsequent chapters. These items all cost money and must be provided for in the budget.

3. *Building.* If a building is available, free of rental, this item need have no place in the budget. It may be necessary, however, to pay for janitor service. For example, a public school building or a church can be secured free of rental with a provision that janitor service be paid for. If so, this item should be taken care of in the budget. *Money spent to secure a well kept building is well spent.* A few dollars thus expended will secure clean, wholesome surroundings. Do not try to economize at this point at the expense of the welfare of the children. Remember, "Cleanliness is next to Godliness."

4. *Equipment.* Proper seating is essential in any school. Seats should be comfortable and adapted to the work to be carried on. Tables should be provided for the work requiring this kind of equipment. These and other necessary items of equipment will be discussed in Chapter VI. An estimate should be made of the cost of each item and necessary funds provided.

Making a budget.—Make a list of all the items

involving expense. Then make a careful estimate of the cost of each item. For example, the number of books needed by the teachers and pupils should be stated and the cost of each. Material for handwork should be estimated and the cost stated. Every item of expense should be thus separately listed.

In making up the budget in this way, make a list of *all the items needed.* Do this even if you do not expect to be able to secure enough money to purchase everything listed. When the list has been completed it should be gone over carefully to see whether any necessary items have been omitted.

Expenditure of funds.—The budget will contain a list of all the items of expense and the cost of each. It now remains for the principal or other person responsible to compare the total amount of the budget and the actual amount of money available. If enough has been secured to pay for all the items listed in the budget, all that is necessary is to go ahead and make the purchases. Unfortunately, however, in some instances this will not be the case. The amount of money provided in cash and subscriptions may be less than is needed. Here arises the necessity of making further effort to secure the funds needed. Effort or lack of it at this point may make the difference between a good school and a poor one. If after further effort is made not enough money is available for the purchase of all the items, selection will have to be made. The list should be gone over carefully again and those selected which are most important. The point to be emphasized here is, *spend the money for those things most essential to the success of the school.*

Securing funds.—*The raising of funds should be completed before the date set for the opening of the school.* See to it that the necessary amount is provided either in cash or reliable pledges. This should be done long enough before the school opens to enable you to have all necessary supplies on hand for the first day.

The *sources of funds* will depend upon circumstances. If the school is being conducted by a single church, then the membership of the church, if financially able, should furnish the funds. Or, if several churches are cooperating in conducting the school, they should jointly finance the school if financially able to do so. In any case, the church or churches should be appealed to first for financial support. If possible, get the church to *include in its regular budget a definite amount for the support of the vacation school.* In case two or more churches are cooperating get each church to do this.

When churches are not financially able to support the vacation schools, other means of securing funds will have to be found. If the money is raised by *subscriptions*, plans must be made for carrying on the campaign. Begin early by securing a list of names of all persons from whom you expect to receive contributions. See to it that they receive full information concerning the purposes and needs of the school. When this is done, call directly upon each one either by letter or in person, or both. In case a letter is used, inclose a subscription blank requesting immediate return. Since the matter of preparing the church and community has already been taken up in Chapter III, no further discussion at this point is necessary.

CHAPTER VI

PROVIDING HOUSING, EQUIPMENT, AND SUPPLIES

VACATION schools usually have no housing and equipment of their own. Buildings and equipment have to be provided by those responsible for setting up the organization. It need not be said that this is a very important task and not infrequently a rather difficult one. Usually it means that the use of buildings devoted to other purposes have to be secured. Public school buildings, churches, and parish houses are the chief sources of supply. Further reference will be made to the use of these buildings in a later discussion.

Suitable buildings.—In selecting buildings for the use of vacation schools, certain standards should be kept clearly in mind. It will not always be possible to meet the standards completely, but their application in selecting buildings will help to secure the best available. Insistence that these standards be met as far as possible will also serve, looking to the future, in securing better housing for the schools.

1. Buildings should be accessible to the children. Enrollment will be made up largely of those who live near the building in which the school is held. It should, therefore, be located as nearly as possible at the center of the school population. Good transportation facilities extending in all directions from the school will in effect serve to bring it nearer the children, and this fact must be taken into

account. But patronage from the immediate locality will have to be relied upon chiefly to make up the enrollment. The building site is also a factor to be taken into account. If a choice between buildings is possible, the one located in wholesome surroundings should be selected. Avoid as far as possible noisy and congested localities. Space surrounding the building for recreational activities is highly desirable, if indeed not quite indispensable. In a word, the building should so be located as to provide healthful, wholesome surroundings for the children.

2. Building space should be adequate and properly arranged. The vacation school, in common with other kinds of schools, requires that housing shall be adapted to its program. If it is desired to have the school meet by departments for general exercises and worship, rooms suitable to this purpose must be available. Class rooms will be needed sufficient in number and size to accommodate the various class room groups. For example, if a sufficient number of pupils are enrolled in the Junior Department to form two or more groups for the purpose of study and teaching, a suitable room should be provided for each. When a choice is possible, the building should be secured which will provide for the different sized groups and various activities of the school. The writer recalls a case in which a church was being used which was wholly unsuited to the work of this school. It had but a single room in which the children of all ages and sizes, to the number of more than fifty, were meeting. Within a short distance were located two other churches comparatively well equipped, either

of which would have been available for the asking. It would be difficult to imagine any valid reason for attempting to use the building in which the school was being held, when a much more suitable one could have been secured.

Light and *ventilation* are both of primary importance in any building used for school purposes. A dimly lighted room is injurious to the eyes, if we expect the children to do anything more than merely listen to the teacher. A dark, dingy room is also very depressing. This is especially true of its influence upon children. Not only their eyes but their spirits suffer from such surroundings. Plenty of light well distributed throughout all the rooms used for school purposes is essential to good work.

The proper ventilation of a building also requires attention. In a poorly ventilated room neither teachers nor children can do their best work. Bad air soon results in drowsiness, headache, and dullness of both mind and spirit. Teachers are apt to become irritable and the pupils indifferent and restless. The health of both teachers and pupils is impaired by foul air. Since the promotion of the health and happiness of children is one of our objectives, we should not consent to use buildings which in considerable degree defeat our purpose. It is a mistake to assume that some special ventilating device is necessary. If window space is sufficient in amount and rightly distributed, this will provide opportunity for suitable ventilation; but some one must see to it that proper ventilation is actually secured.

Cleanliness of buildings is another important

matter. If the rooms are not in proper condition they should be thoroughly cleaned before the opening day of the school. Floors, walls, windows, furniture, and fixtures will need attention. Starting with a clean building it should be kept so day by day. This is not possible without competent janitor service, which requires that some person be held definitely responsible for the proper care of the building. Floors should be swept after the close of school each day. Each morning at least one hour before the session begins, windows and doors should be opened, and furniture and fixtures thoroughly dusted. It is quite as much the business of the principal to supervise the work of the janitor as it is that of the teachers. Let it be repeated that some person must be held definitely responsible for this work and should receive reasonable compensation therefor. The work of the janitor should be under the supervision of the principal, the same as that of the teachers.

Schoolrooms should have a *cheerful* appearance. Whatever can be done to brighten up a room and make it attractive is well worth doing. Pictures and other suitable wall decorations are available at small cost. If one sets about it to make a schoolroom attractive, it is surprising how much can be accomplished with small outlay of time and money. Children are keenly sensitive to their surroundings. If we desire them to be happy and cheerful, their environment must be such as to call forth appropriate response. If we wish them to be reverent and responsive to the beautiful in nature and life, their immediate surroundings must suggest these things.

Adequate equipment.—A visit to any high-grade public school will reveal to the observer the large place that equipment has in modern education. In a trip throughout the building one will observe that seats and desks are of different sizes for the different age groups. If measurements are taken it will be found that the seats and desks are arranged in such way as to accomplish two things: first, to make the children comfortable, and second, to enable them to carry on their work most advantageously. Aisles will also be found to be of uniform width and corresponding to the size of the seats. The seats will be placed in such a way as to secure the best lighting and to relieve eye strain as far as possible. Blackboards and charts are so placed that the work placed thereon can be readily seen from any point in the room. Tables of proper size and height are provided for certain kinds of work. These serve as examples of adequate equipment for a schoolroom. The point here to be emphasized is that equipment is chosen, as pointed out above, with reference to the comfort of children and in view of the particular kinds of activities that are to be carried on. For example, if handwork is to be done, then a place with suitable equipment is provided. If children are to study and recite lessons, equipment is provided with this end in view.

A well-equipped schoolroom always suggests to the observer the kind of work to be carried on. For example, it is not difficult at all to conclude from the appearance of classrooms that history is taught in one, science in another, and mathematics in still another. It is even quite possible to deter-

mine whether a room is being used to teach ancient, modern, or American history. Likewise the different equipment in different rooms makes it clear that biology is taught in one, physics in another, and some other branch of science in a third. These examples are given to show the widespread application of the principle that equipment must be adapted to the kind of school work to be carried on. It must not only be adequate in amount but of the specific kind that will be most useful in doing the particular thing in hand.

The principle stated above must be observed in equipping a vacation school as well as any other kind of school. Just because it is held during the vacation period does not make suitable equipment less necessary. Neither are results more easily obtainable without equipment just because the school is held in a church or some other building not primarily intended for school purposes. Children and the kind of work they are expected to carry on are the determining factors. It is, therefore, necessary in securing suitable equipment to take into account the number of children to be enrolled, their ages, the number and sizes of the groups to be formed, and the various activities in which they will be engaged. Having all this in mind, we should set about it systematically and persistently to secure the best possible equipment. Tables, chairs, seats, desks, blackboards, maps, charts, reference books, and other items of equipment should be carefully listed and secured in advance of the opening of the school.

It will not always, perhaps, be possible to secure complete equipment; but this conclusion should

not be reached until every reasonable effort has been made to obtain it. We should not accept defeat at this point until we have to accept it. If, however, after every reasonable effort has been exhausted it is evident that we shall lack some items of equipment, then choice must be made on a basis of what is most important. This will require a thorough knowledge of the needs of the children and a selection of equipment made on the basis of those needs which are most pressing.

Providing supplies.—No exact line of demarcation exists between equipment and supplies. For convenience we classify those things which are more permanent, such as desks, blackboards, maps, charts and the like, as equipment; things less permanent such as pencils, notebooks, material for handwork and so on, are classed as supplies. It is also customary to include in the latter list textbooks for teachers and pupils. While this distinction we have just made is not particularly important, it is necessary to keep in mind that a number of items which we commonly list as supplies must be provided. Certain articles are what we call stock articles—that is, they are always needed by the pupils in carrying on their school work. Among these are textbooks or subject matter in some other form for the use of pupils and teachers. Paper and pencils are needed for written work and drawing. If any considerable feature is made of drawing, special kinds of paper are required and colored pencils or other means of coloring must be supplied. Materials suitable to the different kinds of handwork belong in the list of necessary supplies. Crayon must be supplied for blackboard work.

These are given merely as examples. Other articles will be needed in accordance with the various activities carried on by the different groups of children.

In the list of supplies no item is of more importance than textbooks for use by the children. This statement, of course, applies to children of proper age to use the books. A safe standard to apply to determine whether textbooks are necessary is found in the practice of the public school. If the children use them in their work there, it may be taken for granted that they are old enough to need them in the vacation school. Suitable textbooks in the hands of these pupils should be regarded as quite indispensable to the success of their work.

Preparation has to be made in advance if supplies are available for the opening day of the school. A good way to go about this is as follows: Make a list of all the activities of each grade or department; in connection with each activity listed enumerate the kinds of supplies needed; then, on the basis of probable enrollment, estimate the required quantity of each. The next step is to purchase the supplies and have them on hand for the work of the first day. At the close of the first day, a careful check of the list should be made to see whether anything has been omitted and to find out whether larger quantities will be required. An adequate quantity of necessary supplies should always be on hand and ready to use the moment they are needed.

Meeting the requirements of the school.—It would seem that no argument is necessary to sustain the contention that reasonable requirements of the

school, as to buildings, equipment, and supplies, must be met. Nothing will be gained, however, by admitting this contention, if teachers and pupils are actually deprived of those things upon which the success of the school depends. Knowledge of what is needed must be accompanied by energetic, persistent effort to secure it.

Much is to be said in favor of using public school buildings in case they are available. They were constructed for school purposes and are usually reasonably well equipped. The children are accustomed to their environment and respond in customary fashion in matters relating to work and discipline. Objections to their use by the vacation school are, however, sometimes raised. In some cases there seems to be some doubt of the legality of using public school buildings for this purpose. In other cases public sentiment, quite apart from any question of legality, is not favorable to their use. On the part of some there is the fear that the principle of separation of church and state is being violated. Others feel that the public school is disassociated from religion in the minds of the children—that the use of the building tends to secularize the work of the vacation school. These same objections are made to the use of public school buildings by week-day church schools. Whether all of these are valid is perhaps an open question. At least there is much difference of opinion. In any event, the objections cannot be ignored. The objections in all cases should be given due consideration before decision is reached.

The objections made to the use of public school buildings suggest the reasons why churches should

be used. Public opinion supports their use. Associations formed by the children are with the church. Environment in a greater or lesser degree is in harmony with the purpose of the school. It need not be said that no such objections exist as in the case of public schools. On the contrary, they are quite a different kind. Occasionally one hears that the use of the church has been denied because of the fear that the sacred building will be profaned. Cases of this kind are probably very rare. Let us hope at least that such is the case and turn our attention to more weighty matters.

In contrast to public school buildings, churches are not usually either constructed or equipped for school purposes. This fact constitutes a real problem and one very difficult of solution in many cases. No satisfactory solution of this difficulty is possible short of a thoroughgoing reconstruction of buildings or construction of new buildings suitable to the needs of childhood and youth. In the meantime, buildings will have to be used which are in many ways unsuitable. We should not, however, accept this as a permanent condition under which vacation schools will be compelled to carry on their work.

Making the best of things.—This is precisely what will be required in the case of many vacation schools. But let us consider what this means. Merely accepting things as they are is not making the best of them. We must first of all make the things the best it is possible to make them. In the case of a building, we should not attempt to make the best of poor conditions until we are sure that the conditions themselves cannot be made

better. For example, if a single room is all that is available as a meeting place for two or more groups of children, the use of curtains, serving as partitions, will improve conditions. Under these conditions, although still unfavorable, if teachers and pupils will carry on their work as quietly as possible, much of the handicap under which they are working will be overcome. This is one way of making the best of things.

In the case of inadequate or unsuitable equipment the same principle applies. The place to start to make the best of what we have, is the point at which we have secured the best equipment attainable. Having done this, attention should be directed wholly to making the best possible use of what we have. The same thing can be said of supplies, although there is much less reason for lack of them than in the case of equipment. Supplies involve comparatively small expense, and are usually readily obtainable on short notice. Lack of intelligent effort is the chief cause of failure to have the necessary material for use in carrying on the work of the school.

It is to be regretted that far too many vacation schools are carrying on their work under very unfavorable physical conditions. Nothing is gained, however, by merely finding fault. A workman who has acquired the habit of complaining of his tools invariably fails to make the best use of them. Poor work becomes the standard and is frequently due not to the tools but to the workman himself. Making the best of things requires first of all the right state of mind. Fully recognizing the limitations under which our work must be carried on,

a determination to overcome them as far as possible is the first step in doing so. This must be accompanied, of course, by intelligent, persistent effort. Enthusiasm rightfully directed by intelligence will not only be a large factor in overcoming present difficulties, but will also do much to secure better conditions for the future.

CHAPTER VII

CHOOSING THE CURRICULUM

In the last analysis the teacher is the key to successful work in daily vacation church schools as in other schools. The best possible program, the most suitable curriculum can never be a satisfactory substitute for good teaching. The curriculum, the teachers, the whole atmosphere and conduct of the school must be such as will win and hold the confidence, respect and loyalty of both parents and pupils, otherwise the school cannot hope to render the service it is expected to render to boys and girls. However, the best teacher must have something to teach—a curriculum.

The curriculum.—Subject matter is as necessary in the field of religious education as in any other phase of education. The subject matter is found primarily in the Bible, but much additional instruction material is found in the world about us, and in the life and times of those great souls through whom the Bible has through the centuries expressed itself in human events. There is no interest in the life of any human being that lies outside the interests of the kingdom of God and, therefore, the lesson materials to be used with little children and boys and girls in the vacation church schools must be as wide in range and rich in contents as their experiences, needs, and capacities will justify.

The graded principle.—In the chapter on organ-

izing the vacation church school we see the necessity for grouping children according to age, experience, and capacity. The very purpose of such grouping is that the lesson materials, the worship program, and the activities may be such as will make it possible for the teachers to organize circumstances around the pupils so that they will themselves naturally and quickly respond to the desire for making something, doing something, being something.

Children of the kindergarten age are altogether different in their needs, interests, and capacities from the children of either the Primary or the Junior groups. It must follow, therefore, that lesson materials chosen for any one of these grades will differ from that chosen for any other. We cannot have one lesson, whether it be story, worship, or project activity, that will fit all of these pupils at the same time.

At least three groups will be necessary. One group should cover the years three, four, and five. These little children who are unable to read or write receive most of their ideas, stimulus, and instruction from the teacher's words and actions. Primary pupils (six, seven, and eight years) can, as a rule, read the simpler things and are capable of discovering and carrying on many desirable activities themselves. The junior pupil (nine, ten, and eleven) is very much more mature than either of the other two groups and capable, therefore, of discovering, developing, and testing many projects for himself. He will, however, have very serious need for the most careful supervision.

In order to provide for these groups many of

the publishing houses are issuing materials prepared expressly for use with these distinctive age groups. Before determining what lesson materials will be used in any school, the leaders of the school should approach, first, their own denominational headquarters, asking for help and guidance in this selection. In the end the selection should be made solely on the basis of getting the best materials available, no matter where they are published. The child's needs are the first consideration.

Standards of choice.—In studying the materials now available for use in these schools and in determining which, if any, of these will be used, certain standards or tests may be applied.

1. Is the range of material as wide as the interests of the group of children with whom the lessons are to be used?

2. Is the material really adapted to the particular group for whom it is intended? That is, does it present Bible truths and life factors in a wholesome and natural way so that the child who comes in contact with these materials will find himself in a familiar atmosphere, finding through familiar everyday circumstance a loving, heavenly Father, an attractive world in which to live and a chance to express himself in loving service therein?

3. Are the ideals of conduct, as revealed in the stories, the activities, the worship, the play, such as are desirable in the development of Christian master-motives? Is the material offered so related to the home life, the church life, the school and community life of the pupil that all of these will be made more attractive to him and he himself more attractive in them?

4. The deductions of childhood are immediate and logical. The lesson material, therefore, must contain only such ideas, ideals, and suggestions as the child mind can clearly understand and immediately apply in his daily living. Personal conduct, such as consideration for others, cleanliness, orderliness, unselfishness, truthfulness, these and a host of other virtues must be directly resultant from the lesson materials used.

5. Is the material presented in such a way as to create a desire for more? Is the child led from expectancy to greater expectancy?

It must be clear that in the choice of curriculum material, only such materials will be used as will help boys and girls to develop habits of right thinking, right speaking, right doing. Proper perspective must be maintained so that out of the subject matter will naturally grow the desire to carry on in the home, in the community, and within the school itself projects of helpfulness, consideration, improvement of conditions, and the like.

Curriculum material, if it fails to carry over into life, is not only inadequate but, in many instances, positively harmful. The imagery, the ideals that remain in the mind of the child after he has been in contact with the lessons of the day, must be desirable, stimulating, and compelling.

The final test of all curriculum material is its ability to develop in boys and girls habits of right conduct and to help them to establish standards of choice that are desirable, thus to build in them a Christian master motive.

Each teacher should be provided not only with the actual lesson material for the grade which she

is teaching but for the preceding and for the following grades so that she may know that for which she is preparing them. Access ought to be had also to as many library books as her time and energy will permit her to study in order that she may bring to her pupils the enrichment of a wider range of information than her own lesson book can possibly provide. The chapter on "Equipment and Supplies" has indicated the additional equipment that she will need for her pupils.

The teacher and the curriculum together must be so carefully selected that boys and girls who come in contact with them will be increased "in wisdom and in favor with God and man" at the same time that their bodily functions are increased through the operation of the natural law.

The teacher, the curriculum, and the school must be so planned as to hold a greater number and make a larger contribution than the street else the children will not be found in the school.

Lesson materials for use in vacation church schools may be obtained of your church school supply house.

CHAPTER VIII

PLANNING THE DAILY PROGRAM

THIS is a school and must be conducted with promptness, regularity, dignity. Children respect and prefer orderliness. This necessitates carefully prepared daily programs.

Each school must prepare its own program. No school however large, however small, can conceivably carry on a worthwhile piece of work without a careful, thought-out orderly arrangement of groups, lesson materials, daily schedule.

Points of view.—With reference to the daily program, there are two points of view:

(a) *The parallel course method.* One considers each factor of the program as a unit when considered in the light of the entire school; that is to say, music will be a complete unified course taught at a certain period each day throughout the entire school. Craft work will be another course unified and carried on at another period throughout the entire school. Thus each course becomes a thing in itself, running through the entire school. This makes the school program something of the nature of a layer cake bound together by the principal of the school and iced over by a common location, equipment, and general spirit.

(b) *The group course-method.* The second point of view thinks of the school program as an interrelated series of activities built for each day around

a common theme, which is itself a part of a larger theme, which may run for a week or two weeks. According to this view, the music, the story lesson material, the craft work, the devotional period, recreation, and all the other elements of the program for the day will be so closely articulated that each grows out of their dependence upon the other. Thus any child who has passed through the program on any day has had a central idea brought before him from many points of view, some of which are of his own group. The tendency, at the present time in the educational world, is toward the latter view because it is more in harmony with the laws and principles of human development.

Correlation of daily program.—In any case, the courses must have the elements of unity, coherence, progress, and adaptation.

(a) *Unity.* The course must be a complete whole. Any pupil who has had the training offered in music, biblical material, or other course must have completed some recognizable unit of work; that is to say, the pupil's mind must have been carried through to the completion of some definite part of the work in hand. He must have learned a complete hymn, to know all the Joseph stories, to have completed some kind of related craft work.

(b) *Coherence.* Not only must the course be a unit, but the different parts of it must be related to and develop out of each other so that the inevitable deductions of the child, from the materials offered, will be desirable and closely related; for instance, he must see how cause and effect are related; he must appreciate the significance of prac-

tice, memorization, understanding of the meaning of the words to the finished singing of a hymn.

(c) *Progress.* Moreover the course must make progress. It must move from simpler to more difficult things. The pupil at the end of the vacation school should be capable of greater appreciation, a little closer attention, take larger initiative as a result of the course which he is studying.

(d) *Adaptation.* In addition to all of these, the course must be adapted to the number of pupils, the nature of the pupils, whether they are normal, subnormal, precocious, foreign-speaking, residential, industrial, etc. The course must take into account the equipment, the housing, the number and training of the teachers and the previous contacts the pupil has had with moral and religious instruction. All of these elements are of peculiar significance when it is realized that from forty per cent to sixty per cent of the children in the vacation church school have been untouched by any other religious educational agency.

What is true of the separate course itself is doubly true of the daily program. Each element of the program ought naturally and inevitably to grow out of the preceding element; it ought to lead up to and prepare for that which follows; for instance, the immediate outgrowth of the worship period ought to be an atmosphere of interested anticipation for those things which have to do with the lesson and other activities of the day. It ought to create the kind of atmosphere in which wholesome and delightful human relationships exist and in which the spirit and work of the school becomes sur-

charged with vital spiritual significance. Craft work should be the immediate outgrowth of the story or more formal instruction of the day or the week. The project, presented through story and song or other channel of instruction, ought to eventuate in purposeful pupil activity. Thus the whole work of the whole session becomes in the mind of the child the outgrowth of the central idea of the day.

The daily theme.—The theme for the day, in turn, is a definite portion of the theme covered by the work of the entire week or perhaps longer. This makes possible the grouping of music, recreation, expressional activities about a compelling idea, part of which is wrought into the lives of pupils each day during a period of time. Some ideas are large enough to require five, six, or eight days; others can be compassed in much shorter time. The idea is not always centered in the story period. It may be centered in the expressional period as, for instance, when the school is giving its attention to some community enterprise such as "clean-up week," or "national week," with the Fourth of July as the pivotal point and other similar ideas. Sometimes it will be a conduct idea such as consideration for others, courtesy, and the like. Sometimes it will be the promotion of Sunday school enrollment and attendance. Sometimes it will be built around a Bible character. In any event, the determining factor in the building of the program will be the idea which the program is intended to build into the lives of the children of the school.

The elements of the program.—Whatever daily

program may be adopted, at least the following elements will find their place therein:

(a) Devotional expression and training.
(b) Music—devotional, patriotic, and general.
(c) Stories—Bible, missionary, and conduct.
(d) Handcraft—dramatization and other expressional activities.
(e) Recreation.

Devotional. There will be included in this period the greetings, the hymns, prayers, Scripture, and any other fitting devotional element. In each instance every item of the period will be adjusted to the age range of the pupils involved. There can be no worship without participation, therefore the music selected, the prayers offered, the Scripture used, the discussion or story will of necessity be within the range of the needs, interests, and capacities of these pupils. The greatest care should be exercised to see that no possible idea, expression, or attitude can come in contact with the boys and girls which may not properly become a permanent part of their lives, therefore jazz music or hymns with words that are beyond the experience of the pupils will never be used. Such music and words as are used will be of the highest character and worthy of a place in the memory of wholesome Christian boys and girls. For upon these, perhaps, some time will depend the making of a choice in some climactic emergency. The whole purpose of the worship period is to bring both pupil and teacher into close personal contact with their heavenly Father in such a way as to give direction and spiritual vitality to all the activities of the day both in and out of school.

Music. This period is intended to teach boys and girls how to sing as well as what to sing. Perhaps no more real contribution can be made through the vacation school than the knowledge of and the skill to sing the great hymns of the church, the masterpieces of patriotic music and the delightful folk songs of the ages. The child's memory should be stored with the gems of music and words that will enrich their own thinking and become the basis of inspiration, uplift, and personal enjoyment. In the conducting of the music period, the teacher must be assured that each pupil has an opportunity in participating both by contact with the words and music through the chart, book, or other visional method, and that the child's personal capacity in this direction is as fully developed as circumstances permit. It ought to be remembered, however, that hymns cannot be practiced and used for devotional purposes at one and the same time. Hymns and other exercises, learned during the music period, may be used during the devotional period for devotional purposes.

In schools, made up largely of children of foreign-speaking parents, in industrial sections and in schools in the open country or small villages, the musical element is of supreme importance.

The following chapter will indicate methods by which a single musical instrument can be used to serve the needs of the entire school where more than one is not available.

Story or class period. This period will, of course, be conducted separately for each group, as one story generally will not serve to minister to the vital needs nor carry a vital message to all the

children of all the ages. The stories will be Bible, missionary, cultural, and conduct. In any event, the story will be related vitally with the theme of the day. Sometimes, perhaps, the theme of the day will grow out of the story itself. Sometimes the story will provide the major element of the developing theme. Sometimes the story will be used to aid the pupil in the discovery of the theme. In any event, it will be so integrated with the other elements of the program for the day that it unmistakably grows out of all that has preceded and finds its full fruition in what follows. The teacher or teachers whose specialty is storytelling will always make it a point to see that the most effective methods are employed at this point in the program.

Sometimes the story is a supplemental or illustrative element in connection with the teaching of a more formal lesson. The use of the narrative, however, will be found perhaps the most effective means of instruction.

Expressional activities. These include handcraft, dramatics, service activities, and the various forms of purposeful pupil participation. It is clear that the weaving of baskets, the making of dresses, may not of themselves be religious educational elements unless they become in the mind of the child a means to accomplish a desirable spiritual end. The activity itself has intrinsic interest and value but when the activity through the choice of the child becomes the channel through which he expresses his desires for service, which grows out of the story or lesson of the day, then the activity rises to the dignity of spiritual expression.

The expressional element may find more than one channel.

(a) It may take the constructive channel in which the idea is transferred from the mind into some concrete expression such as a bird house, in the making of which the child becomes the instrument of a loving heavenly Father in caring for the feathered folk.

(b) It may find expression in the desire of development of personal skills in order that more effective service may be rendered such as learning to sew, to cook, or some other helpful skill.

(c) It may take the form of dramatic reproduction of the lesson, in order that others may share in the discovery of the truth involved.

(d) It may find expression in the desire to increase social activity through recreation or other form of "good time," such as teaching games. Those whose previous experience has not contained directed play elements thus become helpers as well as receivers in this form of expression. One part of the class may be used to do this for another part.

Care must be taken to see that whatever the expressional activity may be and through whatever channel it may issue, the child himself clearly understands the relationship of the activity to the theme of the day. In order that this may be clear to him, most often the pupil himself will be afforded the opportunity, under the direction of the teacher, to determine the activity, to fix the goal, and with the aid of the teacher discover the means of accomplishing the objective. The teacher must lead in the application of the standards of accuracy and correctness which shall test the work of the pupil.

Recreation. The length and content of this period will be determined by the age, interests, and capacities of the pupils involved. The place of play in the educative process has become increasingly clear in these latter days. Wise teachers, therefore, will appreciate the necessity for careful selection and supervision of play activities so that the period does not descend into mere "fooling around." More frequently than not, the play element may contain a vital part of the instruction related to the theme of the day; for instance, when some missionary story has been told, the games of boys and girls of similar age in the country involved may be played at the recreational period, thus increasing the appreciation and developing the spirit of brotherhood among the children.

The recreational period should result in refreshed bodies, alert minds, increased conduct control, enlarged capacities, and consideration and team play.

Beginning and closing periods.—There will, of necessity, need to be a preliminary period to the school day and a closing period. The pre-session period is the one in which the teacher and helpers arrange the rooms, materials, and other necessities. It contains a brief period for prayer and discussion of the work of the day so that the teacher or teachers and the helpers may meet the arriving children with dignity, with steadiness, with graciousness and with assurance.

The closing period is equally important. Sometimes the entire school is assembled for this very brief period. A few quiet words, the necessary announcements, a brief prayer, sometimes preceded by the salute to the flag. In the larger schools this

closing period will be held separately by departments or groups. It should be a part of the daily program of every school.

Length of period.—The amount of time allotted to each one of the elements described above will be determined by the age, capacity, and number of pupils involved. Very young children do not have the power of close attention for much more than ten or twelve minutes, therefore the program would of necessity contain many more items than that for the older children with whom the time allotment, very much less broken, averages thirty or forty minutes given to the elements named above. Wise teachers will discover that flexibility at this point is of very great help. When children have grown tired or lost interest, the next item on the program should be taken up immediately, or the nature of the work being carried on must be so changed as to command the attention and interested participation of the pupils. When the participation of the pupil ceases, the educative process is at an end for him and he becomes forthwith a menace to the situation from the standpoint of discipline.

In rural schools.—In planning the daily program for schools held in the open country or very small rural villages, it will be necessary to give careful attention to the circumstances of the village or country home conditions. Children on the farm will have certain duties to perform in early morning, around the noon hour, and in the latter part of the afternoon. Any program built for children thus involved must take all of these factors into account. In many instances there will be long distances to travel. The men will be busy in the

fields and, unless there is a woman who can drive a car, more than likely the children will walk to the school. The opening hour and closing hour must take this into account.

Sometimes it will be found very much more satisfactory to use the public school building for rural vacation school work. In this case, extreme care must be taken to see that the rights of no group within the community are in any way violated. The school, in order to maintain the separation of church and state, must needs pay a rental fee for the use of the school building.

Directed play, picnics, hikes, and outdoor activities are as interesting and attractive to childhood in the open country as to childhood in the congested city.

Tests of the daily program.—There are many tests that can be applied to a daily program. Among them certainly the following will be found. These should be applied fearlessly and frequently to the daily program in use in the school:

(a) Can it be used without rushing the pupils; that is, is there time for deliberate action?

(b) Does it fit the housing, equipment, and leadership? A program may be ideal from the standpoint of unity, coherence, and progress, but unless it is adapted to the local conditions it may be a real impediment.

(c) Does it make adequate provision for the interests of each age group?

The following chapter will show the arrangement of time schedule in the conduct of the school session.

CHAPTER IX

CONDUCTING THE SCHOOL SESSION

In Chapters II and IV the aims of the church school and the organization through which these aims are to be accomplished were discussed. It was made clear that a school must have a principal, director, or other supervising officer. In Chapter VIII we learned how to plan a daily program, reaching in that discussion the point where that program was to be developed into a daily time schedule.

We must not forget a statement made previously, that this is a *school* and, therefore, the children will expect orderliness, promptness, and regularity. They will also expect sympathetic firmness on the part of the teachers in the maintenance of school standards. Any failure in these quarters means the failure of the school, because in the minds of the children the school is not what its name implies that it is. No substitute can take the place of the confidence of the child concerning the project in which he is expected to take a part. In the present chapter, therefore, we will see how the conduct of the school session may contribute to the end that the school may be winsome, uplifting, illuminating, and challenging.

The activities of the school session will revolve around the principal, the teachers, the helpers, the pupils. The machine through which all of these persons attempt to accomplish the aim of the school

comprises the *lesson materials*, the *school equipment*, the *daily schedule*, and the *teaching methods*. The lesson materials and teaching force have been discussed in preceding chapters.

Length of session.—As indicated above, the school session ranges in length from one to three hours in the morning. Sometimes there is a second session in the afternoon given over largely to directed play and other supervised expressional activities. The average school session, however, is about two and one half hours. Most schools have just one session, the morning session.

The length and number of sessions must be determined in the light of the local conditions. Obviously where the children must travel long distances to reach the school the sessions may be somewhat shorter. This will occur most frequently in vacation schools in the open country or in sections where the project is being put on by a single agency such as the Church Federation, Daily Vacation Bible School Association, or an individual church, and where children must go far to reach the school.

However, even in rural sections where transportation in busses to the school is provided, as is done in a number of places, the length of the session will not be materially changed. In some rural communities, the parents have expressed their willingness to use their own automobiles for transportation rather than have the children miss the benefit of the longer school session. At Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, for instance, this resulted in an average attendance of ninety-one per cent of the children during the five weeks' session of the school.

There are other factors, of course, which enter into the consideration of this matter—where children are engaged in home duties during the earlier hours and at noon. The session must accommodate itself to that situation unless the conditions can be changed. It is safe to say that experience shows that the average length of session noted above is probably the most successful.

The principal.—Naturally the burden of administration of the daily schedule rests upon the principal or director, whose characteristics and duties have been indicated in a previous chapter. The wisdom of this officer will be shown by his willingness to master, if not already in command of them, the principles and methods of administration and supervision, since upon his capacity to win the loyalty, cooperation, and enthusiastic support of his teachers will depend very largely the spirit and effectiveness of the school. Frequently an untrained worker, under the supervision of a tactful, gracious, understanding principal, may be developed into a really effective teacher. Certainly the pupil helpers in the school must have the most sympathetic, wise, and closest possible supervision and direction. The promptness, regularity, the "go" of the school, its snap and vigor will be dependent upon the principal or director.

In many schools, where there are but two or three teachers, one of these will of necessity act as principal. It is clear, however, that no genuine supervisional work can be carried on by an individual who is not free to study the teachers in action.

Fixing responsibilities.—Prior to the opening day of the school, the principal, the other teachers and,

if possible, the helpers of the school should be assembled for a thorough discussion of all the details of the school program and its administration. Each teacher and helper must know exactly what his responsibilities are and how they relate to the program of the entire school. That is to say, the teacher whose specialty is music must understand clearly how the music program integrates with the program of the school. She must be so familiar with the plan for conducting the departmental or school sessions that without announcement or other device she will fit into that program unobtrusively and therefore effectively.

When teachers or officers overemphasize themselves or their office, it is clear that the best interests of the school take secondary position. "Each for all and all for each," must be the working motto of teachers and officers.

When the general work of the school is made clear, then the principal and teachers will plan the details of the daily program, determining the length of each period, its content, the grouping of the children, the enrollment in the classes, the methods and time of checking, the reports of attendance, activities, needs, and other items of interest. However large or small the school, it will be necessary that these steps be taken in order to insure the smooth running of the school program.

Grouping.—In working out the daily schedule, careful attention will be given to the discussion of grouping as set forth in a previous chapter. Certainly no average school can operate with fewer than three groups; namely, the Kindergarten Group for children under the first grade; the Primary Group

for children of six, seven, and eight, or the first three grades; and a junior group of nine, ten, and eleven, or grades under the junior high.

The One-Room School

The daily schedule for schools meeting in one room and for those meeting in more than one room will differ in adjustment but not in principle. The school of one teacher and the school of many teachers likewise will differ in adjustment but not in principle. The training in worship, the instruction, and the expressional needs of the child must be the determining factors in arranging the groups. Children of similar interests, needs, and capacities must be put into the same group in order to serve them effectively.

In the one-room, one-teacher school, the following time schedule may afford a basis for planning the daily program:

1. Pre-session Period—20 to 30 minutes.
2. Worship Period—15 minutes.
3. Class Period—35 minutes.
4. Music Period—20 minutes.
5. Recreation and Play Period—15 minutes.
6. Purposeful Activity Period—35 minutes.
7. Closing Period—10 minutes.

The one hundred and fifty minutes in a two and one half hour session thus will be occupied by one hundred and thirty minutes of directed activity, twenty minutes being allotted for change from one form of activity to another between periods.

Pre-session period.—Twenty minutes or more prior to the hour at which the school session opens, the teacher and the helpers should assemble at the

school. The room should be arranged in order, materials and equipment for the day's use organized and placed at convenient points, and the detail of the daily schedule gone over so that the teacher may be assured everyone is in readiness for the day's work. This having been done, a brief prayer session for and by the teacher and helpers will be held. Thus the leaders of the school go out to meet the children quietly and with the glow of immediate contact with the heavenly Father in their faces. Perhaps nothing more effective than this can be done to insure the desired attitude on the part of the pupils as the school day begins.

Worship period.—In this type of school the worship period and the closing period will doubtless of necessity be conducted as a general assembly, as may also the music and play periods. This arrangement will depend, however, upon the number and dependability of the pupil helpers. If there are a sufficient number of older pupils, say of twelve years or more, the worship period may be adjusted so that while the teacher is conducting the worship with the kindergarten group, the two older groups may be engaged in some purposeful activity, perhaps the completion of some bit of craftwork held over from the preceding session. Similar activity will then be carried on by the kindergarten group while the primary and junior groups together are having their worship session. Wherever possible, at least two groups should be arranged for the worship period.

(a) *Separating the groups.* It will be necessary, of course, to arrange for some kind of separation during this period. This is a somewhat difficult

matter. But it has been done successfully. In suitable weather, send the other group out to the church lawn or to the school playground. On rainy or cold days send them to the work tables. In the latter case, screens or curtains are used so that the children at the tables can neither see others nor be seen by others. This affords the element of seclusion to the worshiping group even though those behind the curtain or screens must necessarily hear all that is going on.

(b) *The worshipful attitude.* Principals and teachers must see to it that during the worship period there is the atmosphere of reverent but cheerful anticipation. Here are a group of children whose loved and respected teacher is accompanying them in their intimate companionship with the loving heavenly Father and gracious, tender, Saviour Friend. Unless joy and brightness are found in this period, it will have failed in giving the proper conception of the worshipful relation of a child to his heavenly Father. But joy and brightness must never be confused with so-called "pep" and "jazz." These are a real hindrance to genuine worship.

For this reason, the music, the words used in connection therewith, the prayers, the Scripture, the story talk must be within the range of child understanding and childhood experience. There are great hymns and wondrous passages filled with vital spiritual truth for children. There are equally great hymns and passages that have absolutely no place in a worship program with children. The program guides, in most instances, give careful instruction and suggestion in regard to this matter. Principals and teachers, in planning the details of

the worship period of the daily program, will not fail to secure the very best possible guidance at this point.

Class period.—The class period should be conducted separately for each group. In the one-room school, the group being instructed will be on one side of the screens or curtain, the remainder of the school will be on the other side or outdoors in charge of the older pupils, who are the official helpers of the teacher. Under the direction of these pupils, the children will carry on the activities which have been planned specifically for that day and period.

When it is remembered that this period is of about thirty-five minutes' duration, it will be seen how necessary is the careful itemizing of the things to be done. This list should be in the hands of the pupil assistants. Each of these assistants or helpers should know the names of the boys or the girls for whom he is specifically responsible. Each of the children should know to whom he should look for guidance and help during this period. It is recognized, of course, that in any instance the class work with primary and junior groups will have to be carried on as one course, at least during the story-telling portion of the class period. Certainly any expressional activities growing out of the story-telling period will require closer age groups. In a program of this sort it is clear that the periods for music, worship, class instruction, and so on cannot occur at the same hour for all of the groups, since, while the kindergarten group is having its worship, the other group may be having a portion of its purposeful activity period, and

so on, unless it be necessary to combine the entire school for worship, play, or music. Even then the utmost effort must be made to secure the separation indicated above by using older pupil helpers.

The music period.—A method similar to that suggested for the class period for securing separation of age groups may be employed during the music period. Of course, in a one-room school there will be just one musical instrument and it may, therefore, be necessary to have the music period as a school group.

There may be some older pupils capable of playing the piano or organ so that the teacher is left free to direct the musical operations. In schools in foreign-speaking sections, it is possible that neither the older nor the younger children will be familiar with some of the musical numbers suggested in the program guides for the different groups. In this case the entire school, doubtless, would be assembled for musical instruction. Generally speaking, however, separation of the kindergarten group from the older ones is desirable. Obviously, whenever possible, any group not engaged in music should be sent outdoors, when weather permits, since they will be unable to do anything like effective or satisfactory work during the music period even though they be behind screens or curtain. The teacher must of course take careful forethought and give explicit direction to the pupils who are in charge of the outdoor group so that the time shall not be wasted. Thus the activities there carried on, whether they be dramatization, directed play, or the learning of new games, will prove both helpful and desirable. This will be one more concern of

the teacher who is carrying as heavy a load as the teacher of the one-room school must carry. She must be principal, director, supervisor, and teacher all in one.

Recreation and play period.—During this period the teacher in the one-room school will find her only opportunity for relaxation, and this will depend upon the capacity of her helpers to carry out effectively the instructions she may give. The children must of necessity have games to fit their interests and capacities, the smaller children being grouped by themselves, the older ones by themselves, and so on. Sometimes it will be necessary to separate the older boys from the older girls. The program guides for the daily sessions will indicate from day to day the actual games that may be used during this period. The pupils and helpers may select, subject to the teacher's approval, such plays and games as they think fit the lesson of the day and that the children may enjoy. During this period, too, the pupils themselves ought to have increasingly large opportunity to choose the things they would like to do. It is a period of relaxation and ought to afford both refreshment and stimulation.

The kindergarten children, during the succeeding period, will, of course, have opportunity for continued recreational activities. Moreover, they will doubtless be provided with a soda cracker and a glass of water or milk (preferably the latter). The teacher's chief concern will be to see that the period is not abused and that the children do not play any one game so long as to become tired of it nor overexert themselves. The opportunity to teach

consideration, kindness, helpfulness, and fair play during this period is very great. The pupil helpers will be of great value in the conduct of the period.

The purposeful activity period.—This is given over to the smaller groups carrying on their own chosen activities, some of them at tables, others dramatizing or doing some form of constructive work that may be carried on by the individual working alone. During this period, especially in one-room schools, the older pupils will be used to teach the younger pupils certain things such as weaving, knitting, sewing, the use of the scroll saw, knot tying, and other similar activities related to the theme of the day. Such a time schedule as that on page 93 might be worked out for a teacher of a one-room school.

The closing period.—After having rearranged the school equipment and having stored away the materials used during the day pupils in the room will have their chairs arranged facing the platform and attention centered in the teacher. A few quiet words or a brief story, the necessary announcements, a closing sentence or benediction in concert, or perhaps a salute to the American flag or to the Christian flag, or sometimes a very brief prayer will constitute this period.

In one-room schools it is scarcely possible to separate the groups for an effective closing period. Care must be taken, however, as in the worship period, that the children are not fussing about caps, hats, or articles of clothing or standing with one foot aimed in the direction of the door so as to be the "first out" at the conclusion of the session. An attitude of grateful reverence on the part of the

	9–9:15	9:20–9:40	9:45–10:20	10:25–10:40	10:45–11:20	11:20–11:30
Kindergarten (4–5)	Worship	Music	Purposeful Activities	Play	Class	Closing
Primary (6, 7, 8)	Worship	Music	Class	Play	Purposeful Activities	Closing
Junior (9, 10, 11)	Worship	Music	Class	Play	Purposeful Activities	Closing
Teacher	School as Group	School as Group	Primary and Junior Class	School as one group using helpers	Kindergarten Class	School as one group
Helpers	Assist the Teacher	Assist the Teacher	Conduct Kindergarten purposeful activities	Lead the play groups as directed by teacher	Conduct purposeful activities of P. & J. groups	Assist teacher in closing program

teacher and her helpers will greatly assist toward securing the desired attitude.

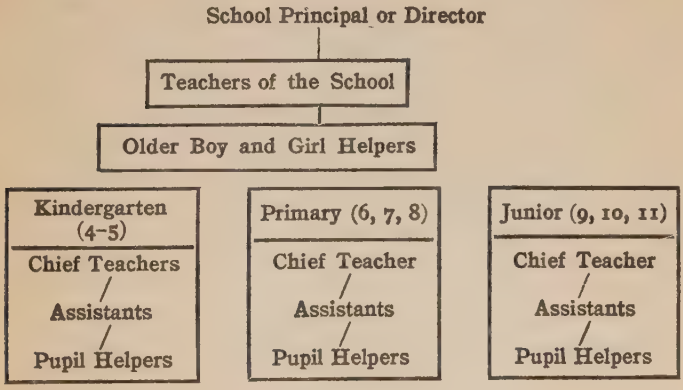
The Larger Schools

Grouping.—In the larger schools there are separate age groups, as suggested in previous chapters, and doubtless a sufficient number of teachers to provide at least one leader for each group. There should be separate programs for each group for the entire session, except perhaps the closing period of the school day when the entire school may be assembled and the principal conduct the period as suggested above. The size of classes will vary with the age of the pupils and the number of teachers available.

Class grouping.—It is safe to say that where practicable the classes within the age group as kindergarten, primary, junior, ought to be so adjusted in size that at least fourteen square feet of floor space per pupil are available. The teacher's capacity is another factor determining the size of the class. The nature of the period, too, is involved in this. The membership, the size, and the teacher for each class will be determined by the principal or director in conference with the teachers of the school. So far as possible, each of the teachers ought to have older pupils as helpers in carrying on their work. Certainly no school with more than one teacher will operate less than three groups, namely, kindergarten (4 and 5 years), primary (6, 7, and 8 years), and junior (9, 10, and 11 years). Each of these groups will be subdivided according to the nature of the period and the demands of the activities therein; thus during the recreation or

play period, the children will be grouped in teams or other desirable groups according to the games to be played. During the purposeful activity period, the project will determine the grouping. During the music period perhaps, or the worship period the entire group may be led as a unit. In all grouping the determining factors are the need of the pupil and his participation.

In the final determination of the daily time schedule, the principal will depend largely upon the chief teacher of the age-group, since, where an age group has two or more teachers, one of these will be recognized as the chief teacher for the group —a sort of group principal or superintendent. Associated with this teacher will be the other teachers and pupil helpers. The following diagram indicates the distribution of responsibilities.


School Principal or Director
Teachers of the School
Older Boy and Girl Helpers
Kindergarten (4–5)
Chief Teachers / Assistants / Pupil Helpers
Primary (6, 7, 8)
Chief Teacher / Assistants / Pupil Helpers
Junior (9, 10, 11)
Chief Teacher / Assistants / Pupil Helpers

Suggested Programs:

8: 30–8: 40 Assembly of teachers and workers, arrangement of equipment and plans.

8:50 Devotional service—teachers and workers.

9:00 Formal opening of school, with processional of children from outdoors where possible, each age group marching to its own department room or location. Here the chief teacher takes charge. Older pupils acting as monitors during the processional will see that pupils quietly and satisfactorily reach the proper place.

Following this, beginning about 9:05, each departmental group will carry on its program as suggested in the program guides provided by the various publishing houses for the group. The discussion of the elements of the daily program, found in the preceding chapter, will guide principal and teachers in the final determination of the items placed upon the daily schedule. Experience has shown that it is advisable to rearrange the time schedule where practicable at least twice during a five-weeks' period. This avoids monotony.

The International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools suggests in its 1923 *Prospectus* the following daily schedule, beginning at nine o'clock.

9:00 Processional, worship, hymn, Bible verses, prayer.
9:20 Story, usually missionary, to be followed by an offering for missionary purposes.
9:30 Story having to do with conduct.
9:40 Music.
10:00 Bible story and class period.
11:00 Purposeful activity period.
11:50 Closing period, including salute to the American flag and to the Christian flag.

It is suggested that the above program be adapted to the needs of each of the age groups.

Chapter IV in Gage, *How to Conduct a Church Vacation School*, gives in minute detail the daily programs suggested by each of the denominations, by the Federation of Churches, and by the International Association of Daily Vacation Bible Schools. Knapp, *The Community Daily Vacation Bible School*, Chapter VII, presents the International Association program and the Presbyterian program. Both of these books contain many helpful suggestions relative to the work of principal and teachers in daily vacation Bible schools. Probably one of the most suggestive books in this field is Stafford, *The Vacation Religious Day School.* The minute detail contained in this book makes it a valuable assistant to officers and teachers preparing their own daily schedule and program. In the last analysis, every school must prepare its own schedule, since the purpose of program and schedule making is to adjust materials and methods to the conditions of the school and the needs of the pupils.

CHAPTER X

RELATING THE SCHOOL TO HOME, CHURCH, AND COMMUNITY

THE daily vacation church school is recognized as a supplemental agency. The home has the primary responsibility for religious education. The most effective teacher of religion is the mother in the home. There can be no real substitute for the mother-teacher of religion in the home. Conditions, however, warrant the church in supplementing her efforts in the wider contacts that come outside the home. The church does this through its various activities. Whatever these activities may be, they are in addition to, and not instead of, what goes on in the home.

Unfortunately, very many homes afford no real religious education. Thus we must look upon the vacation church school as an educational opportunity to enlarge the program and add to the number of desirable activities in the field of religious education. It places emphasis upon, provides instruction, and practice in, Christian conduct. If properly carried on, such schools will increase the participation, the efficiency, and the interest of the pupils in the activities of home, of local church, and of community. Obviously this is possible only when the vacation church school plans are intimately correlated with the home, church, and community conditions. In this chapter we shall see what the

points of cooperation are and how correlation can be worked out.

There are reciprocal relations both as to opportunity and obligation as between the vacation church school and other agencies dealing with child life in the community.

Relation to the home.—The center of child life is or ought to be in the home. Any agency that tends to divert attention and loyalty from the home, whether this be deliberate or unconscious, ought seriously to question the nature and object of its program. The home ought to be able to look upon the vacation church school as a friend and helper, in providing for the best interests of its children.

(a) The vacation school provides a safe, comfortable, and desirable place for the child during the free summer days. In congested centers, this means physical safety since the motor truck and pleasure vehicles have made streets so very dangerous.

It likewise affords a place of moral safety since the children are constantly in the presence of high ideals of thought and conduct. Parents are glad to have a place to which children may go without leaving behind anxiety and serious concern for physical and moral safety. "One mother said, 'It is worth while if for only a few hours my child can be kept away from the dangers and evil of the streets.' "[1]

(b) As a training camp in desirable attitudes and the development of the homely virtues of kindness, promptness, thoughtfulness, helpfulness, truthfulness and such like, the vacation church school

[1] Clausing in The Sunday School Journal, April 23, 1923.

maintains a most helpful relation to the home. The writer saw recently the pupils of a church school actually carrying on in dramatized form the activities of a day in the home. There was the early morning call to the children to awake; the dressing, the washing of faces and hands, the brushing of teeth, the attention to hair and other needful items of appearance, the aid offered to mother in the preparation of the morning meal, the assembly at the table, the quiet moment of spoken grace, the many items of interested conversation at the table having to do with the lessons of the day, other interests and activities in the church school and the many homely items that come up for discussion at the family table. We heard the directions of "mother" to each one as to what he might do to make her burdens for the day more light, and of how a surprise for father might be developed upon his return at eventide, tired from the day's activities. The errands to be run and all the various activities were the "common round and trivial task" of the ordinary home. It was a genuine delight to see the eager minds of children reaching out to find ways in which they might be helpful and kind, generous and thoughtful to parents, brothers and sisters and those outside the home circle and to all the animal friends. The opportunity which the vacation church school affords for developing right attitudes is one that makes it a genuine asset to the home.

(c) In similar manner, the vacation church school may aid boys and girls in developing skill in the various household arts in which little hands, feet, and bodies need to be trained. This will be

limited only by the physical equipment of the school. Sewing, cooking, gardening, carpentry, and other similar occupational skills provide the opportunity at this point.

(d) The vacation school may actually contribute to the beauty, both social and physical, of home life. Many homes have been helped to establish the custom of the family altar, of grace at meals, the bedtime prayer of children, the telling of stories, the playing of games. The writer has in his desk the photograph of a little Slovak child who tells to her parents each evening the "beautiful Bible story" which she hears during the day at the church school. A Jewish lad gathers together the children of his immediate neighborhood too small to attend the church school. Immediately upon his return from its session, he tells them the story and directs them in the activities in which he himself has had the joy of participating. "A little child shall lead them."

(e) Through the vacation church school teacher or visitor very many homes have been aided in beautifying home conditions. Some of the articles which the children have made at school have been made with relation to such project. Sometimes in discussing the individual children, the vacation school representative can be of genuine help to the worried mother. Particularly in industrial or congested sections these home relationships are especially important. The opportunity to the wise and tactful visitor is almost unlimited. In return, where proper relationships have been established, intelligent insight into the program and purposes of the vacation church school results in hearty coop-

eration in the matter of promptness and regularity of attendance and in the accomplishment of any home work which may be assigned.

Relation to the local church.—The reciprocal relationship, between the local church and the vacation church school, will be dependent in a measure upon the character of the school. Where the school is of the community type, the relationship will be no less intimate but slightly less direct. Where the school is interdenominational, the relationship is more direct. Where the school is put on by a church or churches of a single denomination it is purely a church family matter. The program and activities, therefore, will be developed very largely on the basis of the program of the church or churches involved in the support and conduct of the school. This inter-relationship of whatever character affords splendid opportunity for mutual helpfulness.

(a) *The pastor.* The pastor is the responsible religious educational head of the local church. All the pastors of all the churches thus are responsible for the knowledge of conditions, the declaration of principles, the initiation of any movements looking toward the development of a Christian community. This includes not only the reaching of every individual within the community with the gospel message but also the development of every individual in habits of Christian conduct. The responsibility and authority, vested in the pastor by virtue of his position, can be exercised effectively only when pastor and pupil work together in planning and executing acceptable projects in the field of religious education. Each pastor, therefore, for

himself will in the nature of the case need to discover the specific relationship which he maintains to his vacation church school. He has indeed the obligation to see that the school is a school and makes an actual contribution to the home life, the church life, and the community life through its ministry to childhood and youth. In addition to this, the pastor will recognize in the vacation church school a "splendid opportunity to come in contact with and make the personal acquaintance of boys and girls who have no other church relationships. One of the functions of the school is to associate the non-church boys and girls with the church leaders, with church buildings, with church programs and with boys and girls who are actually related to all of these. Moreover, they will recognize that for the church school to be of largest value it must be organized in accord with sound educational principles. If these are observed, the evangelistic results will be large. 'A large class of these young persons were received into the church membership as a direct result of our school.' "[1]

When it is recalled that the most careful records have been made concerning each pupil on the record blank, showing his name, age, public school grade, church affiliation or preference if any, name of Sunday school teacher and organizations belonged to, it will be seen that these records or duplicates thereof in the hands of the pastor of the church preferred become an instrument of inestimable value for following up the church school. The wise pastor does not need suggestions of this character.

[1] *Administrative Manual Daily Vacation Church Schools* (Booklet), Methodist Board of Sunday Schools.

(b) The Sunday school superintendent, the missionary superintendent and librarian, the director of religious education find in the vacation church school a very real asset. In fact anyone, whether officer or teacher, interested in reaching the largest possible number of children and youth through their Sunday school program will be able to reach through this agency very many children who could not be brought into the school through the ordinary methods of enrollment. Teachers in the vacation school generally make it a point to get the unchurched children into contact with the pastor, officers or teachers of the church of their parents' inclination or choice. Missionary superintendents and librarians will find the children acquainted with missionary stories, missionary dramatics, and some information concerning missionary activities. These may be capitalized during the Sunday services by having the children repeat the dramatization, retell the stories, or by using their information as a means of arousing interest in books having to do with the program of world brotherhood. This is especially true of the children of the beginners, primary, and junior departments.

(c) In the matter of Sunday school enrollment, promptness, and regularity of attendance, and in the capacity of children to participate in the opening service of worship, the Sunday school will find the vacation church school a very real help, providing the Sunday church school, on its part, recognizes its obligation and does all in its power to increase the attendance and interest of the children in the Sunday school.

(d) Many schools have special summer service

activities. This may be a part of a larger denominational or inter-denominational program. In any event, the vacation school will be glad to render any possible assistance by way of instruction and training, development of attitudes and skills so that this work may more effectively be accomplished in the local church. In order to do this, however, it is essential that vacation church school leaders shall be thoroughly acquainted with the purposes and activities involved. Conferences of leaders, having knowledge of the desired points of cooperation, and respect and confidence for it, will make the vacation school a genuine help to the local church program.

Relation to the community.—Whether the vacation church school be put on as a community, inter-denominational or denominational project, it has certain definite relations to the community. There are very many things about the homes of the children, and the churches and the community much in need of being done. They may be such things as children can do. Under the guidance of the teacher, children can be led to discover these things apparently for themselves. Thus the activities become projects which are in the nature of helpful service carried on by the children of the school. Careful planning on the part of the school authorities through the Board or Council of Religious Education, with the local Chambers of Commerce, Rotary, Kiwanis, or other community agencies will yield a rich harvest of things to be done by the children of the vacation school. The reciprocal obligation, however, of support, interest, and enthusiastic commendation must not be overlooked.

(a) *Productive play.* In thinking about community and all other service enterprises, it needs to be recalled by leaders that the discovery of the need is itself an educative process and develops attitudes toward the permanent agencies of the community which are most desirable. More than that, the spirit of play, which finds its fullest satisfaction in constructive activity, may easily be transferred to the helpful things which children may do in the community. The writer has seen groups of boys and girls from vacation schools exhibiting the keenest joy in a community clean-up campaign. Lawns, alleys and unsightly places about the village or community have been raked, set in order and made attractive through the cooperation of children's groups and adult rubbish carts.

(b) *Appreciation.* There is scarcely any community in our own or other lands that does not contain points of historical, industrial, or other interest. There is some street, house, location which is noteworthy for its beauty or some other unusual quality. The development of appreciation for these community factors is a part of the work of the vacation school. But such appreciation must not be blind. Vacation school teachers will make it a point to lead the children to the discovery of the needs of the community for certain betterments. Perhaps there are over-numerous misplaced or unsightly billboards. Perhaps handbills are carelessly thrown about so that the passing winds carry them around to lawns and into corners, making unsightly and unattractive what otherwise might be a city or street beautiful. It may be that lawns go uncared for, trees untrimmed, birds unhoused

or unprotected. There is probably no angle of civic betterment or righteousness that may not properly come before the children for consideration. Where this method has been employed in church schools, a very noticeable toning up in civic morals has been the accompaniment. When the present problems receive the consideration of childhood and youth, social reconstruction is inevitable.

In Japan, one of the most interesting sights is to see a school teacher taking groups of school children to shrines, temples, points of historical and natural beauty and explaining, describing and developing appreciation for these things. In many schools, teachers have found local business firms glad to provide the use of a truck or trucks for the taking of groups of children to the more distant points of interest.

(c) *Children's work for children.* This affords a most stimulating and attractive opportunity for community cooperation on the part of the vacation church school. Day nurseries, orphanages, hospitals usually are sorely in need of toys, pictures, and other articles which children can assemble or prepare. Sending a committee of the older children to the institutes to learn the specific needs and having them report these needs to the school or the section of the school involved is found to be a most stimulating and instructive method of developing desirable personal attitudes toward social service activities.

(d) *Community recreation.* Frequently the children themselves, under proper leadership, are able to prepare for a playground near their school and thus be the initiators of a playground movement

for a community that is in need of such. Pageants, plays, demonstrations which bring instruction, pleasurable participation, and joy to parents are an inevitable part of a thoroughgoing vacation church school. The closing day or week of the school usually contains such activities. The exhibit, in a local store window or other public place, of the handwork produced by the pupils during the sessions of the school, each article bearing the name of the pupil who made it, the arranging of costumes for pageants, dramatics, and other similar activities, all of these are elements in directly relating the adult community consciousness to the school as such. The "comradeship of a common task" thus developing out of the actual program of the school is a most desirable community relationship. Homes, churches, peoples, the community find mutual joys and helpfulness because of the vacation church school.

CHAPTER XI

STANDARDS AND MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS

HAVE our objectives been reached, have our goals been attained? This is the question that thoughtful officers, teachers, and parents will ask themselves (and perhaps each other) as the session of the daily vacation church school ends.

Only in part can the question be answered. For there are some results sought and worked for which cannot at once be measured, indeed cannot be measured at all by any human tests we are able to apply. No one can measure the extent to which spiritual vision of childhood has been quickened and the horizon of young souls pushed back by the religious truths taught. No one can measure the extent to which new motives have been quickened and new ideals brought to life. Only years of living, perhaps eternities of living, will reveal these things.

Yet there are some standards of results which we can fairly apply, some measures of success which may tell us the probable degree to which we have succeeded or failed in our effort to accomplish the deep and lasting things for Christian conduct and character. For, failing in these more immediate and tangible things, the chances are that we have failed in the more ultimate spiritual goals; and, succeeding in these more immediate and easily

measured things, the probabilities are that we have succeeded also in the deeper things.

The appeal to our constituency.—Did the school catch the interest, inspire the confidence, and receive the support of the *parents?* We work directly upon childhood, but, lacking the interested, enthusiastic cooperation of the homes, much waste and loss in efficiency is sure to occur.

Did as large a proportion of the available children enroll as we have a right to expect? Did the school have enough *pull* with the juvenile community to make a comparatively clean sweep into its classes? Did the registration come in *at the opening of the term,* or did it straggle in from day to day even up into the last week or two, as is sometimes the case with loosely conducted schools?

Once registered, did the children *come regularly* and *on time?* Many vacation schools show an average attendance as low as fifty per cent of the enrollment. This means one or both of two things; either a strung-out registration scattering well into the term, or irregular attendance after entrance; and either is relative failure for the school. *We cannot teach children who are not there.* Average attendance is probably a more valid measure of a school than aggregate enrollment, important as this is.

The response of pupils in conduct.—How do the children behave? Let it be granted that we do not want our pupils to be solemn and longfaced in the vacation church school. We do not want them to think of religion mainly as a system of restraints and repressions. We desire the joyous, happy element present in all the child's contacts

with religion. But this does not mean a spirit of mischief, smartness, or irreverence in the classroom; it does not mean boisterousness in the church; it does not mean disrespect for the authority of the teacher and disregard for fitness of conduct in the school.

It is probably fair to say that not a few vacation schools show weakness at this point. In fact it is quite certain that some of them reveal such misconduct and lack of discipline on the part of pupils that it is a serious question whether they should not be closed rather than to be the means of cultivating in children such habits of disrespect and levity toward the church and its enterprises and of disobedience toward teachers and officers.

The educational response of pupils.—It is not enough that pupils shall come to the school and that they shall behave while there. These two conditions are only preliminary to a still more crucial test of the school: *What do we do for the pupils while they are there?* Education has been defined as "producing desired changes in the life of the pupil." What changes have we made in the lives of our pupils through their contact with the vacation school? What have we done to increase their information and knowledge about the Bible and other religious literature, the church and its great enterprises, the Christian Way of living as revealed by the Nazarene? What have we done to quicken conscience, create ideals, and train to right habits and attitudes?

As we have said before, these things, at least most of them, evade any tests that we can apply. They would not be revealed, certainly not all of

them, by examination questions and score cards, useful as these may be in their place. It is here that we must depend on indirect tests which, however, are none the less valid for being indirect:

(1) *Do the pupils come to their classes and the various activities of the school with an attitude of true expectancy?* Do they *expect* to find the work interesting and worth while? If so, the battle for results is half won before it is begun. For surely none have failed to observe that if we go to a sermon, a lecture or a concert with anticipation, *expecting* to like it, we are quite sure to get more from it than if we go indifferent or expecting to be bored. In similar way, children who go to the classroom or the worship period without anticipation or enthusiasm have by this very fact rendered their minds and hearts in no small degree impervious to the influences we would bring to bear upon them. The degree, therefore, to which our school is able *to arouse and maintain a state of expectancy* in its pupils from day to day is one of the surest measures of its educational success.

(2) *Do the pupils in all the exercises of the school maintain an attitude of interested alertness?* Are their minds awake and active? Do they give responsive attention to instruction and to the various activities of the lessons? If we must say no to these questions we have already condemned our school as to vital educational results. For no sleepy, inactive mind ever successfully takes on impressions. No mental activity such as thought or memory or imagination ever works effectively except when attention is keen. No real growth occurs where life is lacking.

And there is another side to this in addition to the immediate loss of results; this is the evil effects of forming the habit of slack attention, of indifference and of dawdling and day-dreaming at times when alertness and concentration and effort are demanded. Every child who sits through a class period in a spirit of indifference and mental inaction is shackling his powers with chains and laying up a store of trouble and inefficiency for the years that lie ahead. And surely no school that fails to call forth the best of the child's capacity for interest and effort can be called a success, even if this school be organized in the name of religion.

(3) *Do the pupils respond with a spirit of co-operation?* Are they loyal to the school with a deep-seated loyalty? Is the school *their* school, an enterprise for which *they* feel responsibility, whose successes are *their* honest pride and whose failures are *their* sincere chagrin?

A certain state inspector of public schools, who spends most of his time visiting the actual work of the classrooms, says that the first item in his report on each school is concerning its *school spirit.* If this is good, minor defects can be remedied; if this is lacking nothing else can be right. Let us, therefore, with our vacation school ask ourselves how completely the pupils identify themselves with the school; how deep down their interest and loyalty go. Will they sacrifice a little if need be for the sake of the school? Will they carry out assigned tasks, prepare assigned topics, participate in exercises and activities arranged for their class or the school? If we must grade our school low on these points there is something fundamentally wrong; if

we can grade them high on these points we have one sure foundation on which to build.

(4) *Do the pupils get a true understanding, grasp, and reasonable mastery of fundamental things?* This question assumes that our school, while recognizing the fact that it is a *vacation* school, aims, nevertheless, at some serious educational results in religious training. We must be able, therefore, to say that our school does more than to bring children in off the streets and supply them with a good environment; that it does more than amuse and entertain; that it does more than act as nursery or social club for the children whose parents are chiefly concerned to know that their offspring are safe and in good hands.

Have the children been taught lessons that are suited to them *as children?* Have they *understood*, and have they felt that they have understood? Have the lessons been such as to fit in with their own lives *as children*, and to influence their thought and conduct *now?* Or have we taught them things in form meant for grown minds—strong meat for babes? Have we bewildered them with thoughts too high for them, and confused them with lessons too deep for them, and so in the end given them the unconscious impression that religion is a thing not *meant* to be understood or thought about in the same intelligent way we treat other things we learn about? The way, therefore, our school has *adapted its materials and methods of instruction* to the mind and heart of childhood, the way it has allowed the child to "understand as a child, think as a child, speak as a child" is one sure measure of its success.

(5) *Do the pupils realize through the school an expanding consciousness of God?* Religion involves loyalty to a code of living, but it goes farther than this; it involves loyalty to a Person—to Christ. We must ask ourselves, therefore, Are these children who are in our classes more clearly conscious of God at work in his world, of Christ as a living presence? Do they naturally and reverently turn in prayer and praise and worship to a loving Father and his Son, their Saviour and Brother? Do they know *how* to worship, and to what extent does our instruction lead to this end. In short, in how far have our ministrations rendered vivid and clear and precious the *God-consciousness* in the lives of our children, and taught them how to attain unto that consciousness?

The vision and care that go into planning and running of the school.—No vacation church school will organize and run itself. This enterprise requires unusual wisdom, consecration, and painstaking care. It is not a task for a novice, nor for a careless enthusiast, nor for a busy and exhausted pastor who himself ought to be taking a vacation. Tests of wisdom and vision in the planning and running of the school will come out at such points as these:

(1) *The financial provisions made.* Does the church try to make the vacation school a charity school? Does it fail to provide for this, one of its most important responsibilities, by a special "drive" for funds? And does it limit the amount to be expended below the efficiency point? This is often done, with the following results:

Teachers are expected to contribute their services or work for next to nothing.

Pupils are not supplied with necessary *textbooks*, the teacher alone being supplied with a book, the pupils receiving their instruction orally from the teacher. Imagine such a system in the public school! There the parent or the school district is not too poor to provide books for the child to study. Only when we come to religion must we haggle and economize and squeeze our pennies in supplying necessary materials for the child's education!

Proper *equipment and supplies* are lacking. More than one vacation school is short on necessary seating, tables, maps, pictures, handcraft materials, and other such necessary adjuncts to good classroom work with children. It may be better to run on this meager basis than not to run at all, but we shall have to mark our school low in efficiency on this factor unless it has seen the futility of attempting to make bricks without straw here as in other lines of education. Edward Bok says he believes in poverty, but only as *a condition to get away from.* Our indefensibly low and uncertain standards of expenditure for things religious in the training of the child are in any degree tolerable only as *a condition to get away from.*

(2) *The educational standards and skill going into the management of the school.* This will manifest itself from the first day of planning for the coming session to the final day when the term is out, the records all made and filed, all bills paid and accounts audited, and notes of comment and suggestion recorded for the guidance of those planning the next year's session. Is our *program* right for the school as a whole; our *daily* program right; our system of records and accounting right; our system

of supervision right? This is all to ask whether our school is on a real business and professional basis, or whether it is a haphazard affair, run on good intentions and devotion but without skill and efficiency.

The teaching force.—It is a fine and inspiring thing that we find so many earnest and consecrated persons willing to give time and effort to the vacation church school with little or no compensation. Yet the very fact of this free or low-paid service introduces a danger and promises a difficulty that all schools need to guard against. For, while not a little of the teaching and supervision of the vacation school is of high grade and beyond criticism, this can hardly be said to characterize these schools as a whole.

Too often have the classes of the vacation school been in charge of young and inexperienced girls who are imbued with the desire to serve, and who have offered their services free or been drafted into the work. Let it be understood that this is not meant to reflect on this group except at a point where they are not in the least at fault; namely, their youth and consequent lack of skill. Many of them have little background of knowledge of what they are required to teach and no trained technique for its presentation. Neither have they had experience in the discipline and control of groups of children. The result of this blind teaching of the blind is lack of interest in the lessons on the part of the children, mischief and misconduct in the classroom, and the consequent inefficiency of the whole process.

But not all poor teaching is done by the young

and inexperienced. Some persons of very fine Christian character and a fine devotion which leads them to offer their services free to the vacation school are nevertheless poor teachers—poor because they do not understand childhood and its capacity for religion, poor because they have not learned the technique of the modern classroom. Nor, should it be remarked, is the vacation school teaching problem solved when a devoted but overworked pastor, more skilled in theology and exegesis than in the pedagogy of childhood, offers his services and takes up the burden.

We shall have to score our school low on teaching efficiency if we cannot provide for our children *as good instruction as that to which they are accustomed in the public schools.*

The school sense of social interest and responsibility.—Has it made better citizens of the community as well as of the Kingdom? Has it conveyed the idea to its pupils that children have their part in making their neighborhood a desirable place to live, keeping it clean and healthful, enhancing its beauty? Have the children come to feel in some degree that they are their brother's keeper? Are they more ready to discover and relieve need or distress? Has the work of the school broadened their feeling of kinship for those of other lands and races and quickened their sympathies for all the human brotherhood of which they are members?

The way the work of the school has related itself to other religious agencies serving the child.—The vacation church school may run for but a few weeks, but the life of the child goes on continuously. When our session ends there is no more of it until

the next summer, but the church, the Sunday school, the home are in session all the year. Has our work definitely related itself to these agencies? Probably from twenty-five to fifty per cent of the vacation school pupils who come to us do not attend any church or Sunday school; what have our instruction and our influence done to lead these pupils to affiliation with these institutions? To what extent have our leadership and stimulus reached out to the homes, quickened their interest in religion and the church, and led to more faithful performance of duty in these directions? Our answers to such questions as these will go far toward revealing the success of our vacation church school.

9,783

DATE DUE

BV 1585 .S75 1923

Stout, John Elbert, 1867-

The daily vacation church school

United Theological Seminary Library
MAIN BV1585.S75 1923
Stout, John E The daily vacation church
3 0645 0005 7456 2